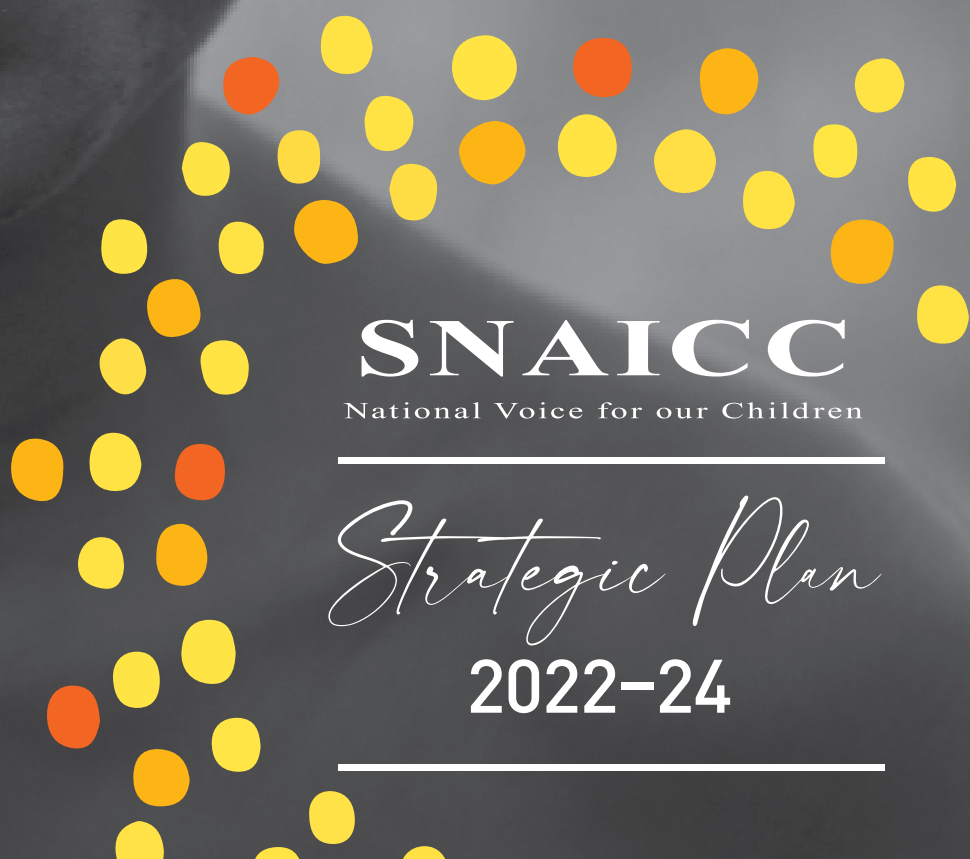




SNAICC
National Voice for our Children



SNAICC

National Voice for our Children

Strategic Plan

2022-24



Contents

Plan-on-a-page	2
Celebrating 40 years of SNAICC	4
Long-term change	7
Strategic Plan context	8
Strategic Plan perspectives	12
Focus areas	14
Organisation roles	16
Target outcomes	18
Strategic priorities	20
Implementation priorities	22
Appendix	24



WHAT IS THE
Change
WE ARE SEEKING
TO SEE?

OUR VISION

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and families are protected, our communities determine their own futures, and our cultural identity is valued.

OUR PURPOSE

We work to amplify the voice of community and the sector for the fulfilment of the rights of our children.

OUR GOAL

Strong, safe, healthy, self-determining Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, connected to family and culture.

SNAICC 2022-2024
STRATEGIC PLAN
Plan-on-a-Page

WHAT ARE OUR
Focus
AREAS?

CHILDREN AND
FAMILIES

Strengthening the safety and wellbeing of our children, raised within family and culture.

CHILD PROTECTION

Transforming the cultural safety and experience of children engaged with child protection services.

EARLY LEARNING
AND DEVELOPMENT

Increasing the quality, access and sustainability of early childhood development services and supports.

WHAT ARE THE
Roles
WE ARE PLAYING?

RESEARCH, POLICY
AND LEADERSHIP

SNAICC seeks to understand and share what works to drive better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families and translate this into policy and practice.

COMMUNITY AND
SECTOR VOICE

SNAICC engages with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and the sector to understand their needs and aspirations, give a strong voice to these perspectives, and influence decisions that impact our children and families. We communicate back to and with community on key issues, programs and projects.

SECTOR
DEVELOPMENT

SNAICC works with and supports the sector to enhance the quality, access and sustainability of services.



Celebrating 40 YEARS OF SNAICC

For the last 40 years, SNAICC has been a passionate national voice representing the interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.

Our work and role has never been more important and we look forward to a bright future working to build on the strengths and capabilities across our communities.



Our WORK

SNAICC was established in 1981, inspired by the need to support Aboriginal and Islander Child Care Agencies (AICCAs) across the country to deal with a pressing major issue: the high rates of removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families and into child protection systems.

Championing the principles of community control and self-determination as the means for sustained improvements for children and families has been at the heart of SNAICC's work — whether on child protection and wellbeing or early childhood education and development.

Today, SNAICC is the national peak body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and the sector supporting these children. Our work comprises policy, advocacy and sector development. We also work with non-Indigenous services alongside Commonwealth and State Governments to improve how agencies design and deliver supports and services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.

SNAICC's work and impact focusses on reform. Across our history, we have worked closely with others to drive change. And this need and opportunity remains ever present as we look to the future.

"It's just great to have someone who understands our battles and advocates for us. We bring forward Aboriginal voices from our communities, though at times we are not listened to. SNAICC has given us an opportunity to voice our communities' concerns, barriers and stresses."

Leanne, NSW, early childhood and care sector.





LONG-TERM *Change*

The SNAICC vision, purpose and goal describe the long-term change we want to see across the community and the role we play in contribution to this impact.

VISION

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and families are protected, our communities determine their own futures, and our cultural identity is valued.

PURPOSE

We work to amplify the voice of community and the sector for the fulfilment of the rights of our children.

GOAL

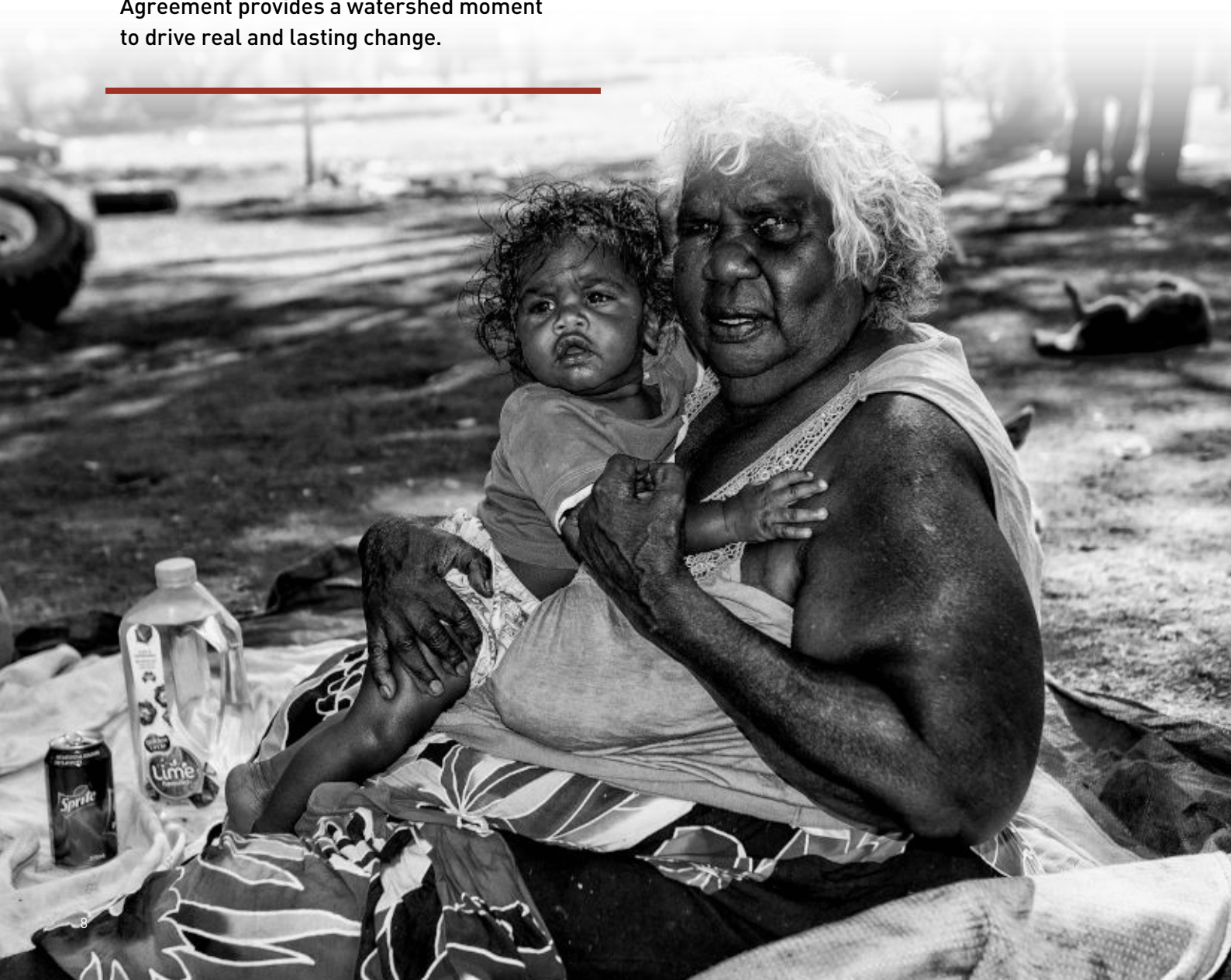
Strong, safe, healthy, self-determining Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, connected to family and culture.

STRATEGIC PLAN *Context*

There remain a number of pressing issues impacting on outcomes, lives and communities.

Despite ongoing reforms, current system responses are not working effectively to drive better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.

Looking forward, the new Closing the Gap Agreement provides a watershed moment to drive real and lasting change.



EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

In 2018, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were 2.5 times more likely than non-Indigenous children to be developmentally vulnerable in two or more developmental domains.



CHILD AND FAMILY SAFETY

There were a staggering 22,297 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care at 30 June 2021.



MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

Despite some improvements, health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mothers and babies remain significantly worse than those for non-Indigenous Australians.



CLOSING THE GAP AGREEMENT

A blueprint that has potential to drive real and lasting change to the lives and livelihoods of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.



EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

The early years are a critical period for all children to develop strong health, development and learning outcomes. Yet, many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children miss out on high-quality early learning and other important supports, putting them at a higher risk of developing problems that will impact on their long-term health, education and wellbeing outcomes.

In 2018, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were 2.5 times more likely than non-Indigenous children to be developmentally vulnerable in two or more developmental domains. This gap has seen limited change over the past decade. And there are significant variations across jurisdictions. In this context, ongoing work and efforts are recognised as being critical to enhance access and quality of early learning and other early years services.



MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

Maternal health is a key factor in child mortality rates, while pregnancy, birth and early childhood present critical transition opportunities for a child's healthy growth and development. Despite some improvements, health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mothers and babies remain significantly worse than those for non-Indigenous Australians.

In this context, ongoing work and efforts are recognised as being essential to provide pregnant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and mothers with access to universal provision of high quality culturally safe prenatal care.



CHILD AND FAMILY SAFETY

There were a staggering 22,297 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care at 30 June 2021. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were 10 times more likely than non-Indigenous children to be in out-of-home care, an over-representation that has increased consistently over the last 10 years, and are over-represented across the system. At the same time, child and family safety continues to be an important area of focus across the country, with an opportunity to build on promising models that recognise the importance of kinship relationships and cultural identity development to achieving stability and belonging for children.



CLOSING THE GAP AGREEMENT

The new Closing the Gap Agreement provides a blueprint for system reform; a blueprint that has potential to drive real and lasting change to the lives and livelihoods of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.

Our work and responsibility is now to work in partnership with governments, services and communities to see the aspiration and promise of this initiative realised – supporting the delivery of key initiatives and holding key stakeholders accountable to their actions.

Source: The Family Matters Report 2021 (2021).



SNAICC is recognised as being a strong champion and voice representing the interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.

Being the National Voice for our Children requires an ongoing focus and consideration of the broad experiences of children and families across the life course.

SNAICC is recognised as a catalyst for change – drawing on the strength and authority from our connection to community and members.

There is a need for SNAICC to strengthen our operating model and broaden funding sources to shore up our long term sustainability.

STRATEGIC PLAN *Perspectives*

SNAICC's members and other services alongside our Board and Council have provided important perspectives to inform the future focus and direction of the organisation.

SNAICC is recognised as being a strong champion and voice representing the interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families. Our focus and work on policy and leadership is recognised as bringing critical perspectives to the attention of Commonwealth and State Governments. Our work supporting the sector including through the convening role we play is also recognised as a real strength.

Being the National Voice for our Children requires an ongoing focus and consideration of the broad experiences of children and families across the life course. The critical need and opportunity for SNAICC to remain focused on the early years of a child's life is also recognised, along with the need for SNAICC to ensure our work and efforts consider all children and families across Australia.

SNAICC is recognised as a catalyst for change – drawing on the strength and authority from our connection to community and members. Nevertheless, a real need and opportunity remains for SNAICC to further strengthen our partnerships and connections with community and our members. Opportunities to provide a strong voice to government and opportunities to strengthen sector capacity and development are identified as important areas for the future.

There is a need for SNAICC to strengthen our operating model and broaden funding sources to shore up our long term sustainability. In particular, although SNAICC is recognised as having a strong team and diverse set of projects and initiatives, more work is required to strengthen internal operations and build financial resilience.

FOCUS *Areas*

SNAICC seeks to harness the potential of our communities to drive genuine and substantial improvements in the human rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families through focussing on three core areas.

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Strengthening the safety and wellbeing of our children, raised within family and culture

CHILD PROTECTION

Transforming the cultural safety and experience of children engaged with child protection services

EARLY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Increasing the quality, access and sustainability of early childhood development services and supports



CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

The responsibility to support child wellbeing and safety outcomes rests with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Research highlights the unique value of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child-rearing practices, the importance of Indigenous-led solutions to improving outcomes, and impact of cultural identity to the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. Yet, these strengths are undermined by an ever-deepening crisis of child removal that breaks families apart and disrupts the social fabric of communities.

The answer for our children lies not in service systems but in redressing the causes of vulnerability, and investing in early intervention and prevention to better support and heal families experiencing vulnerabilities. This means engaging in proactive measures to redress poverty, trauma from the Stolen Generations and its ongoing impacts, and the exclusion of our people from designing the solutions.



CHILD PROTECTION

Supporting strong, healthy, self-determining Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children connected to family and culture requires the transformation of Australia's child protection systems. Outcomes for children in out-of-home care remain critical issues: preventing the need for ongoing contact with child protection services is essential as is addressing the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and children in contact with child protection systems.

Quality child protection responses can support healing for children, families and communities, preventing inter-generational harm. Solutions lie in the full implementation of the [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle](#), recognising the centrality of our cultures and the genuine participation of our people in decisions impacting our children. Change also requires redressing the unconscious bias embedded within the systems and those that are tasked to apply them. In practice, this bias may manifest in higher surveillance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families by child protection agencies, or in a tendency to make more punitive decisions when considering plans for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child.



EARLY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

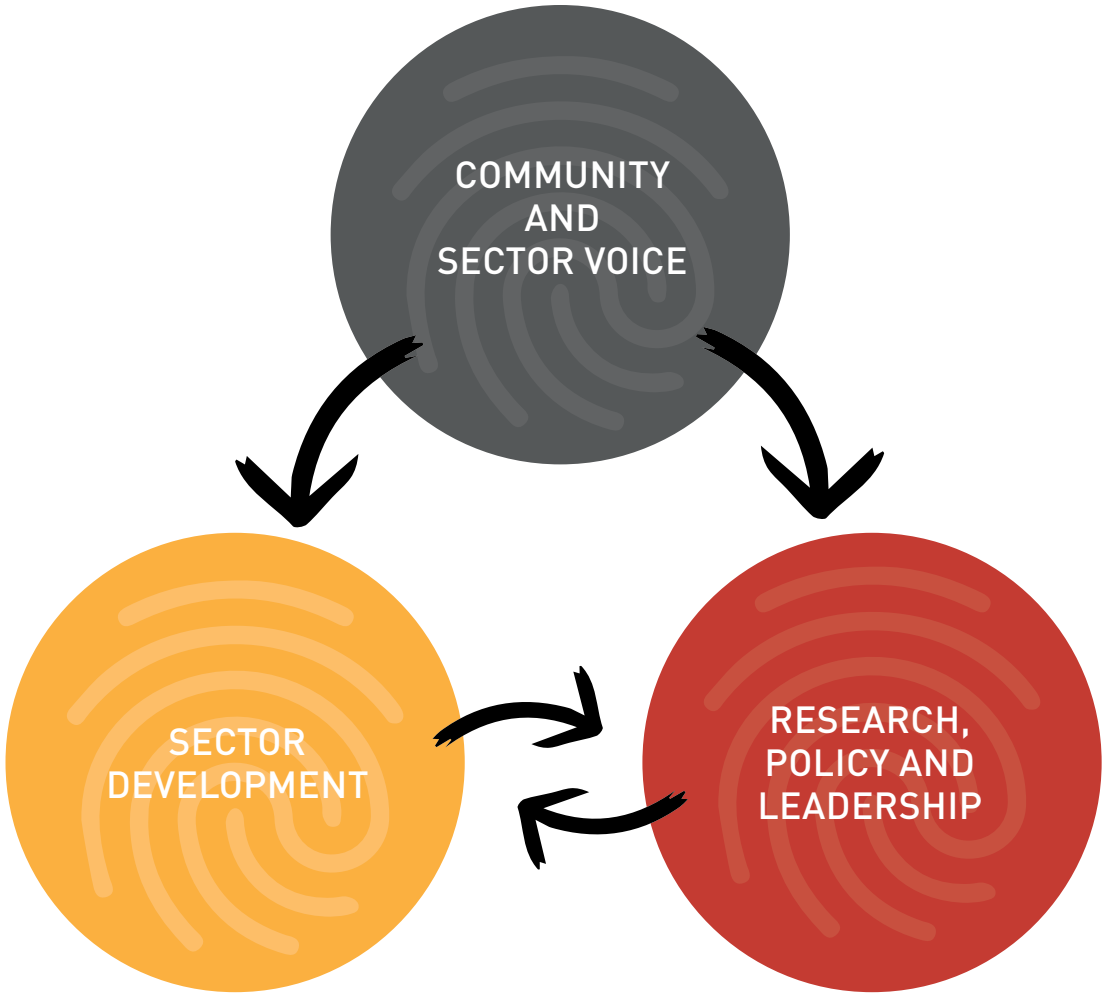
Ensuring the highest quality Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) services and other critical supports for our children and their families is essential, requiring high levels of cultural safety within mainstream services, and increased availability of Aboriginal community-controlled services. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ECEC services are particularly important as they work from the strengths of children's culture to build and reinforce positive self-identity while supporting the wellbeing of children and families experiencing vulnerability in the community.

These services prioritise access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children not accessing, or unlikely to access, mainstream services, and through their unique features overcome many of the identified service access barriers our families experience. They are holistic and responsive to child and family needs, including integrated language development, speech and hearing supports, as well as broader health, family support, capacity building and early intervention.

ORGANISATION

Roles

SNAICC is the national non-government peak body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and the sector supporting these children. Our work and efforts involve pursuing three key and interconnected roles to achieve the organisation’s vision and deliver on the purpose.



SECTOR DEVELOPMENT	COMMUNITY AND SECTOR VOICE	RESEARCH, POLICY AND LEADERSHIP
<p>SNAICC works with and supports the sector to enhance the quality, access and sustainability of services. We do this through our dedicated sector development work and activities supporting members and other community controlled organisations working across the sector.</p>	<p>SNAICC engages with community and the sector to understand their needs and aspirations, give a strong voice to these perspectives and to influence for change. We do this through engaging and working with our members, bringing the sector together to discuss and consider community needs and aspirations, spending time in and with our community, and building respected relationships with decision-makers.</p>	<p>SNAICC seeks to understand and share what works to drive better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families and translate this into policy and practice. We do this through our dedicated policy, research and leadership work.</p>

TARGET

Outcomes

SNAICC’s target outcomes represent the key changes and impacts the organisation is seeking to achieve across our work.

The identified outcomes will collectively contribute to SNAICC being successful in achieving our goal of strong, safe, health, self-determining Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, connected to family and culture.



CULTURALLY
STRONG FAMILIES
AND COMMUNITIES

AWARENESS AND
UNDERSTANDING
AMONG THE BROADER
POPULATION

STRONG AND
EFFECTIVE NATIONAL
PEAK BODY FOR
CHILDREN

STRONG MEMBERS
AND
OTHER SERVICES

CULTURALLY STRONG
AND RESPONSIVE
LAWS, POLICIES
AND PRACTICES

CULTURALLY
STRONG FAMILIES
AND COMMUNITIES

Family, as the foundation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children’s social, cultural and emotional wellbeing, have access to integrated supports and resources they need.

AWARENESS AND
UNDERSTANDING
AMONG THE BROADER
POPULATION

SNAICC increases awareness and shifts attitudes through amplifying our stories and providing avenues for support to influence the laws and policies that support our children.

STRONG AND
EFFECTIVE NATIONAL
PEAK BODY FOR
CHILDREN

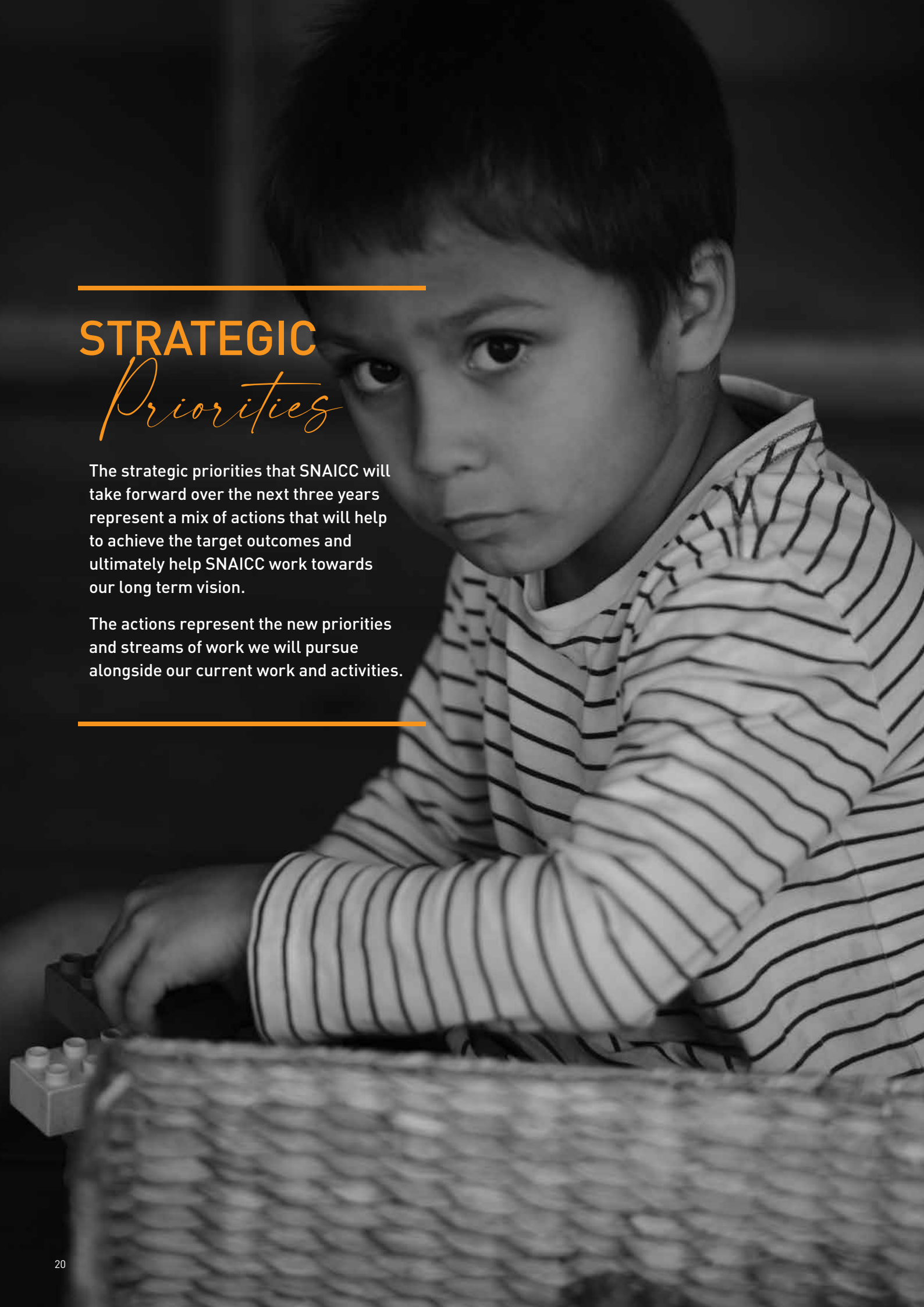
SNAICC is strong, stable and respected as an effective peak in providing a platform for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voice, both individual and collective, on issues impacting children.

STRONG MEMBERS
AND
OTHER SERVICES

SNAICC’s members have adequate funding and resources to grow and ensure our children and their families access the supports that they need to grow up strong, healthy and proud of who they are, with the skills to realise their potential.

CULTURALLY STRONG
AND RESPONSIVE
LAWS, POLICIES
AND PRACTICES

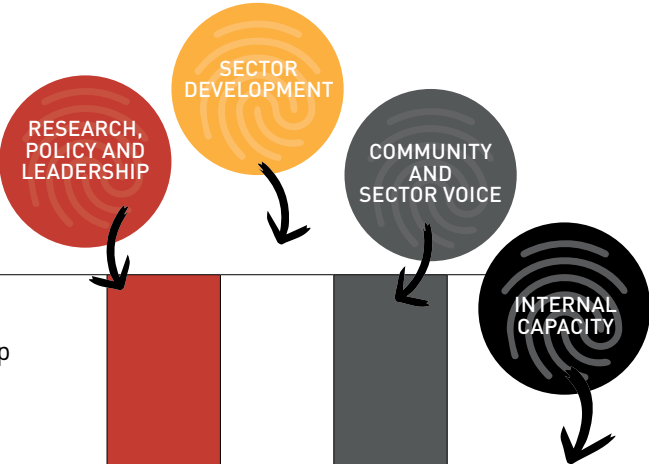
SNAICC influences policy reform and practice to achieve outcomes that will benefit our children and families through promoting an enabling environment of laws, policies, procedures and practices that values their cultures, hears their voice and respects their ways.



STRATEGIC *Priorities*

The strategic priorities that SNAICC will take forward over the next three years represent a mix of actions that will help to achieve the target outcomes and ultimately help SNAICC work towards our long term vision.

The actions represent the new priorities and streams of work we will pursue alongside our current work and activities.



POLICY LEADERSHIP & NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP

Lead the early childhood care and development policy partnership under Closing the Gap to drive implementation and oversight of national strategies for the safety and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.

TRANSFER OF OUT OF HOME CARE RESPONSIBILITIES (OOHC)

Work in partnership to lead a national approach for the transfer of responsibility for OOHC services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to community controlled organisations.

SNAICC MEMBERSHIP

Develop a new membership model and approach to better support SNAICC members to connect with each other as well as inform the design of, and improve access to, SNAICC supports and services.

SECTOR CAPACITY

Work in partnership to grow and strengthen the sector’s capacity to deliver high-quality and sustainable programs and services.

INFLUENCE AND INFORM

Leverage and enhance SNAICC’s reputation and expertise in the sector to influence policy formation and decision making that impacts Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families through strong strategic engagement.

EARLY YEARS INTERMEDIARY

Pilot and scale a new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Early Years Intermediary initiative to strengthen service quality, access and sustainability.

PEAK BODY ESTABLISHMENT

Work in partnership to lead the establishment of new state and territory based peak bodies representing children and families.

RESEARCH AND EVIDENCE

Build the evidence and understandings of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander service models and approaches including through research and advocacy.

SNAICC OPERATING MODEL

Identify and deliver changes to SNAICC’s current operating model to ensure internal structures and ways of working align to best practice.

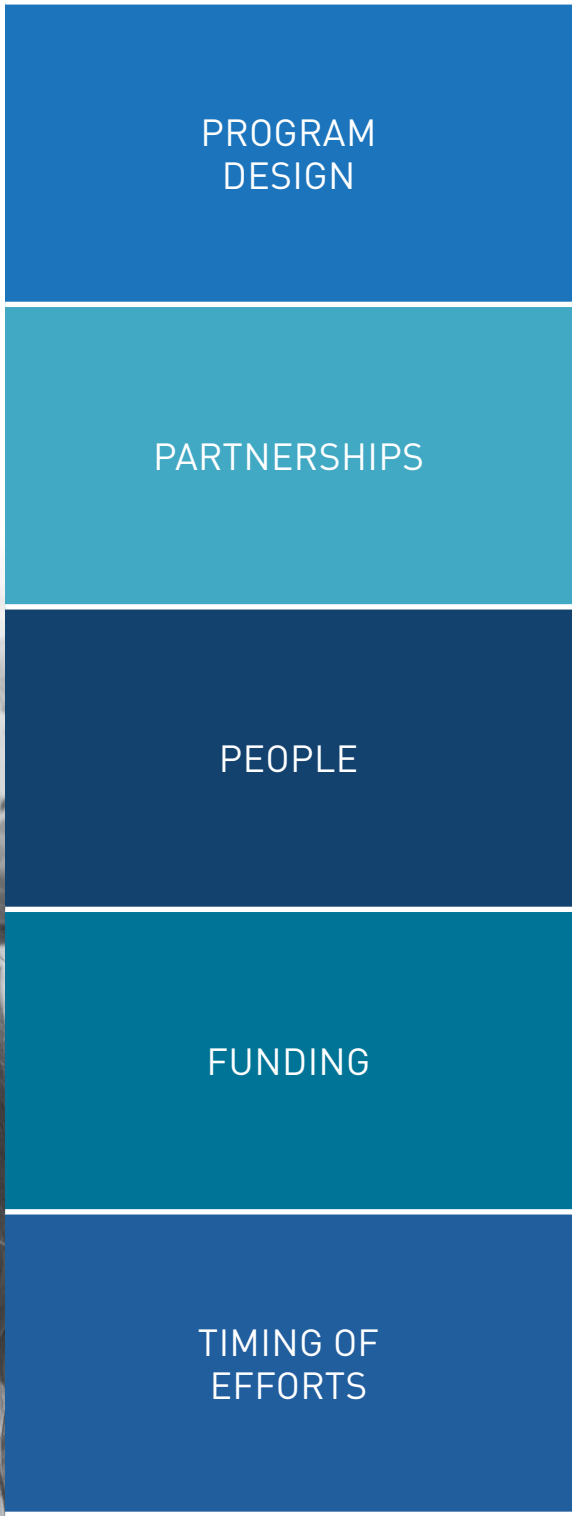
SNAICC FUNDING MODEL

Strengthen the sustainability of SNAICC’s funding model including through the development of new funding and revenue streams.

IMPLEMENTATION

Approach

SNAICC will adopt a structured approach to implementation to ensure the strategic priorities are delivered with fidelity and taken forward in a way that supports our operating capacity and financial sustainability.



PROGRAM DESIGN

The design of the proposed actions will be informed by community perspectives and understanding of what works. Program design will also give deep consideration to community, sector and member needs and aspirations.

PARTNERSHIPS

Community and sector partnerships will be established to deliver the strategic plan and ensure each of the proposed actions draws on the collective understandings, skills and capabilities to achieve the intended change and impact.

PEOPLE

SNAICC will engage sector leaders and professionals to lead the implementation of the strategy and the proposed actions.

FUNDING

SNAICC will design, structure and implement the proposed actions within the available funding envelope. As part of this focus, consideration will be given to long term funding sustainability and partnerships.

TIMING OF EFFORTS

SNAICC will structure and deliver this strategic plan in a way that ensures the timing and impact of each proposed action alongside the whole program of work.

APPENDIX

TARGET OUTCOMES AND INDICATORS OF CHANGE

For each of our target outcomes, we have described different features of the change that we want to achieve.	CULTURALLY STRONG FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES	AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING AMONG THE BROADER POPULATION	STRONG AND EFFECTIVE NATIONAL PEAK BODY FOR CHILDREN	STRONG MEMBERS AND OTHER SERVICES	CULTURALLY STRONG AND RESPONSIVE LAWS, POLICIES AND PRACTICES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communities are empowered to determine their own future• Child and family-led decision making on issues that impact on their lives• Cultural identity and achievements are valued• Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families are supported to care for their children• Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are safe, thriving and realising their dreams.	<p>Increased awareness and understanding by key stakeholders and the public of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strength, importance and value of our cultures• Stolen Generations, colonisation and associated impacts on child development and safety• Healing and supports for families and communities• The impact of quality early years education• The importance of reducing family violence and sexual abuse rates• The benefits of community-controlled services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SNAICC is a sustainable and independent peak body, with a high quality engaged workforce• SNAICC is a culturally safe and responsive organisation• High public awareness of and respect for SNAICC• SNAICC is leading sector debate and influencing government policy shifts and decisions• SNAICC has a strong, inclusive and active membership• Strong relationships with key decision makers, community leaders and strategic sector partners• High quality culturally safety sector servicing the needs of children and their families.	<p>SNAICC members have adequate funding and resources to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families across Australia have access to community controlled services to meet their needs• Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families have service choice, with culturally competent mainstream services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Governments develop and implement laws, policies and practices that respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, are culturally safe and are informed by the needs of our children, families and organisations• Funding for services is based on need and the capacity to provide culturally safe services across Australia• Mainstream services have culturally respectful and responsive policies, processes and practices• Community-controlled organisations are supported to grow and develop new services.



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