

MEDIA RELEASE

September 18, 2024

JUST DO IT – A NEW WAY FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

The Productivity Commission’s report on reforming early childhood education and care (ECEC) will be a game changer for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families if governments are bold enough to back its recommendations.

Peak body SNAICC – National Voice for our Children welcomes the report handed down today *A path to universal early childhood education and care*, and has urged all jurisdictions to show bipartisan support in enacting the recommendations.

CEO Catherine Liddle said governments have the opportunity to be courageous and set a new agenda, making significant inroads into closing the gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

“The report recommendations, if put in place, could chart a very different course for many of our children and families,” Ms Liddle said.

“The Productivity Commission acknowledges the particular barriers facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in accessing culturally safe, sustainable, quality ECEC and recognises the life-changing benefits of being able to access these services.

Ms Liddle noted the particular recommendations in the PC report that will have significant impact for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

- Abolishing the Activity Test, a SNAICC priority for many years
- A new funding model for Aboriginal community-controlled (ACCO) ECEC services, recognising their unique role and additional wrap around service provision
- Improve pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to gain ECEC qualifications
- A development fund to grow services in areas with thin markets to address child care deserts, including through new investment in ACCOs
- Simplifying the Child Care Subsidy and raising the rate for low income families
- Recognising the importance of shared decision-making and working to achieve reform under Closing the Gap structures.

“The Productivity Commission report supports what SNAICC has long advocated – that ACCO services provide the best outcomes for our children, so they are developmentally ready for school and enjoy better outcomes later in life,” Ms Liddle said.

“Governments have a strong body of evidence to inform the change needed in the ECEC system. This PC report, the ACCC report from earlier this year, the many SNAICC reports and those from other sector experts present a roadmap for reform.

“All we need now is the will of all political leaders to just do it.”

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