



Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care

12 May 2016

SUPPORTING FAMILIES, CHANGING FUTURES ACTION PLAN COMMITTS TO GENUINE PARTNERSHIPS AND PRACTICAL ACTIONS

Brisbane, Australia: The Queensland Government's *Supporting Families, Changing Futures* Action Plan has revealed immediate commitments to respond to the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system, and to reduce child and youth sexual abuse, working towards Australia's 'Close the Gap' targets.

It has been revealed that an investment of over \$150 million (an increase of \$60 million) has been pledged for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parenting, family support and well-being services, scheduled to roll out from May 2016. This will see the roll out of several new "...accessible, culturally competent and effective services, focussed on both results and relationships with accountability to families, communities and investors".

Further, the plan commits to partnering with the Queensland Family Matters Working Group and Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak (QATSICPP) to develop the action plan to address the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care, and hold the annual *Family Matters* gathering for community leaders, organisations and networks to work together. The recognition that equitable access to universal services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families is fundamental to addressing overrepresentation is a welcomed policy shift. The plan also commits to an Empowering Families Innovation Fund (a \$6 million investment to support prevention, intervention and strengthening programs).

SNAICC and QATSICPP welcome this commitment, with QATSICPP CEO Natalie Lewis commenting: "This plan reflects a commitment to find a solution to the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care. This plan had been developed with guidance from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders – including Elders, community leaders, organisations and families, and is an excellent example of the results which can be achieved together through genuine partnership.

"To ensure we overcome Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social and economic disadvantage and meet Australia's 'Close the Gap' targets, we must continue to work together and invest in evidence-based solutions to address key factors that can lead to contact with the child protection system."



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The action plan is jointly sponsored by the QLD Treasurer, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnership and Minister for Sport, the Honourable Curtis Pitt MP, and the Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, the Honourable Shannon Fentiman MP. The Action Plan will be considered by the Queensland Government by the end of 2016.

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