



## Secretariat National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care

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### **GOVERNMENTS URGED TO GET BEHIND BUBUP WILAM ABORIGINAL CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRE**

*Melbourne, Australia:* Bubup Wilam, a leading Aboriginal Child and Family Centre located in Thomastown, Melbourne has recently received notification that there is no short-term nor long-term funding available for its ongoing operations from the Victorian State Government.

The news has been a devastating blow to the centre. Since opening its doors, Bubup Wilam has been providing a culturally strong, integrated, best-practice model of care for Victorian Aboriginal children – a model praised and supported by the community, parents, the Victorian State and Federal Governments alike.

In June 2014, Bubup Wilam’s existing funding under the National Partnership Agreement expired. Since then – 24 months ago – both the Federal Government and State Government have not taken responsibility to support the sustainable operation of the service. Bubup Wilam serves many children with complex needs, including a high proportion of children in out-of-home care. Government reports have recognised that responding to these needs requires significant additional resources beyond mainstream child care funding.

Bubup Wilam CEO, Lisa Thorpe comments: “Bubup Wilam and centres like it provide critical services for Victorian Aboriginal children and families, improving development outcomes, building capacity and working in a strengths-based way to close the achievement gap between Aboriginal and non-Indigenous Australians.”

SNAICC and Bubup Wilam CEO, Lisa Thorpe, appeal to Jenny Mikakos, Victorian Minister for Families and Children to seriously consider how this lack of funding will adversely affect Victorian Aboriginal children and their families.

With no funding secured, integrated child and family services currently provided by the centre’s 40 employees to 75 families will be threatened.

Lisa Thorpe states: “Not only would the closure of this centre be an enormous waste of time and tax-payers’ money, it would mean that services and programs that are proven to work – including early intervention and prevention programs, early years education, and health and wellbeing services – would be no longer available to these families.



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“We are at a loss as to why the Victorian State Government refuses to fund such a vital service,” she concludes.

Significant recent funding has been confirmed by state governments for the Aboriginal Child and Family Centres in NSW and Queensland. A similar approach is called for from the Victorian Government.

**/ENDS**

For more information please visit [www.snaicc.org.au](http://www.snaicc.org.au) or contact:

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### ***About SNAICC:***

SNAICC is the national non-government peak body in Australia representing the interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.

Founded in 1981, SNAICC was established to engage in activities that promote and accommodate a strong voice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families.

Over the past 30 years SNAICC’s efforts have resulted in many key milestones and achievements both in policy developments at state, territory and federal levels and in developing innovative and useful resources for the sector.

SNAICC is governed by an influential National Executive made up of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled children and families’ services.