



SNAICC
National Voice for our Children
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation
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SNAICC APPEALS AGAIN FOR GREATER CONSIDERATION FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER SERVICES IN CHILD CARE REFORMS

Canberra, Australia: SNAICC – National Voice for our Children has lodged a second submission to the Senate Committee considering the Jobs for Families Child Care Package, following the first enquiry in February this year. This submission again outlines several concerns with the bill in its current state, recommending several changes to ensure the safety and well-being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children is not compromised.

As per [SNAICC's previous submission](#), which was tendered alongside significant research by Deloitte Access Economics that examined the potential impacts the Bill would have on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, this submission again highlights the ways in which the Jobs for Families Child Care Package will lead to a systemic failure of early childhood outcomes for a generation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

All modelling presented to the government has shown the new system will cause a decrease in participation for our children, particularly those experiencing vulnerability, and that the services set up to serve their unique needs may face closure.

Of significant concern to SNAICC are two key elements of the Jobs for Families Child Care Package:

- The Budget Based Funding (BBF) Program – the specific program designed for areas where a user-pays model is not viable – will be abolished. 80% of services in this program that support over 19,000 children are for Indigenous children.
- Access to subsidised early childhood education and care (ECEC) services will be halved for children whose families earn less than around \$65,000 per annum (which applies to an estimated 78% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children participating in the BBF Program) and who don't meet the *activity test*.

Additionally there is also a call for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific program within the Child Care Safety Net and an attuned funding model for other rural and remote services, as well as calls for provision of at least two full days (or 20 hours) of subsidised

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quality early learning to all children to support their development, regardless of their parents' activities.

This submission also details key recommendations designed to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are not pushed deeper into an entrenched cycle of inter-generational disadvantage through lack of access to quality early years support services.

Strong and enabled Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander designed, managed and delivered early childhood services not only provide high quality early childhood services to Indigenous children, but also support vulnerable families to access an array of integrated services. By threatening the viability of these services, the Jobs for Families Child Care Package shows a fundamental disconnect from the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families.

SNAICC Deputy Chairperson Geraldine Atkinson comments: "I urge the Senate Committee – and all Senators – to think through the realities of how this package would work in very diverse communities across Australia, and particularly how it would meet the developmental needs of the children that require our support most. What looks workable in the Parliament Halls of Canberra is very far from the day-day realities for our people."

"It is the responsibility of the Government to not widen the extreme gap in disadvantage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children currently experience. How Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children fare will be a litmus test for the Jobs for Families Child Care Package. Now is the time to ensure we have the details right."

- SNAICC Deputy Chairperson Geraldine Atkinson

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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.

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

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 Board of Directors made up of representatives from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled children and families' services.

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