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**SNAICC DEEPLY CONCERNED BY CONTINUED ESCALATING NUMBERS OF
ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CHILDREN REMOVED BY
CHILD PROTECTION AUTHORITIES**

Melbourne, Australia: SNAICC – National Voice for our Children, Australia’s national peak body representing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, is deeply troubled by the increased numbers of Indigenous children in out-of-home-care revealed in today’s [Report on Government Services](#) (RoGS).

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are now 9.8 times more likely to be removed by child protection authorities and placed in out-of-home care than their non-Indigenous peers (increasing from 9.5 times in the previous reporting period).

In only one year, the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care has increased from 15,455 to 16,846 (at 30 June 2016), which means Indigenous children now represent 36.3 per cent of all children in statutory out-of-home care (up from 35 per cent in the previous reporting period).

In this, the 20th anniversary of the release of the Bringing them Home Report, this represents an almost 500 per cent increase in the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care since that report was released 20 years ago.

Furthermore, there has been a disappointing drop (from 65.9 per cent to 64.9 per cent) in the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children placed with Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander kin or other family members, or other Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander carers. This is despite the [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle](#) (ATSICPP) being enshrined in the legislation and policy of every state and territory jurisdiction nationally – showing the need for further implementation and accountability across the country.

While total expenditure on child protection related services increased 7.7 per cent (to \$4.8 billion nationally), still only 17 per cent of this was spent on prevention and early intervention focused family support services. In 2009 all

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Australian governments agreed on a National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020 that called for investment to be increasingly directed to prevention. Year after year our governments fail to deliver on this commitment.

SNAICC CEO, Gerry Moore is disappointed by the poor results for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children continually reflected in this report each year, commenting:

“The continued lack of targeted investment in early intervention and preventative measures is evidence that Australia's child protection system is truly broken.

“There is now a dire need for action to address this national crisis – all governments must commit to addressing this over-representation of our kids in out-of-home care. The [Family Matters](#) campaign – backed by hundreds of organisations Australia-wide – has the solutions: first and foremost, a COAG target to address this over-representation, and a national program for preservation and reunification, now we just need governments to listen and take action.”

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About SNAICC – National Voice for our Children:

SNAICC – National Voice for our Children is the national non-governmental peak body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. We work for the fulfilment of the rights of our children, in particular to ensure their safety, development and well-being.

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.

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