



SNAICC  
National Voice for our Children  
(Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation)  
Suite 8, First Floor,  
252-260 St Georges Road  
North Fitzroy VIC 3068

26 January 2018

## FACING OUR HISTORY THE KEY TO RECONCILIATION

**Melbourne, Australia:** SNAICC acknowledges the impact that colonisation continues to have on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children today. Increasing understanding of the lasting impacts of colonisation amongst all Australians is key to our reconciliation as a nation.

“If we, as a nation, are to recognise 26 January as the day that the colonisation of Australia began, then I think it is our responsibility to also recognise the lasting impacts that that colonisation has had,” says Sharron Williams, SNAICC Chairperson.

“The compounding nature of intergenerational trauma continues to see successive generations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children impacted by the costs of colonisation. We need to be talking about where that fits into the celebrations we see taking place across the country.”

Access to quality early years education is proven to have the greatest impact on a child's lifelong education and employment outcomes, however, due to many barriers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are only half as likely to access early education as non-Indigenous children.

Nationally, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are 9.8 times more likely to be living in out-of-home care than non-Indigenous children.

“The atrocities that followed that date – massacres, dispossession, fracturing of cultural knowledge – continue to have a profound impact today, including continued disempowerment and disadvantage of our children and families,” says Ms Williams.

“Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people recognise 26 January as a day of mourning, shared with community, and that is as much about the present and future as it is about the past.

“Our goal must be reconciliation, and that cannot be achieved if we do not acknowledge the true history of our country, and furthermore the reluctance to face that truth. We will not see outcomes improve until we witness that change of attitude on a greater scale.

“It's impossible to heal when we're still feeling the pain every day.”

**ENDS/**

Phone 03 9489 8099 | Fax 03 9489 8044  
PO Box 1445, Fitzroy North VIC 3068  
info@snaicc.org.au | [www.snaicc.org.au](http://www.snaicc.org.au)  
ABN 42 513 562 148



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

Daniel Kovacevic, Communications Coordinator  
[daniel.kovacevic@snaicc.org.au](mailto:daniel.kovacevic@snaicc.org.au) (03) 9489 8099 / 0431 767 363

***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 wellbeing.

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 has 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 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled children and family services.

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[info@snaicc.org.au](mailto:info@snaicc.org.au) | [www.snaicc.org.au](http://www.snaicc.org.au)  
ABN 42 513 562 148