



SNAICC
National Voice for our Children
(Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation)
Level 7, Melbourne Polytechnic (Collingwood)
20 Otter Street
Collingwood VIC 3066

26 January 2019

26 JANUARY NO ANNIVERSARY TO CELEBRATE FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CHILDREN

We cannot celebrate 26 January when our children still face the devastating impacts of colonisation. Instead, on Survival Day we recognise the strength and resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and the survival of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

If we are to celebrate the many great things about our nation, we need a new date that is inclusive of all Australians and ensures we can all participate in celebrations together.

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people 26 January and the colonisation of Australia is a reflection of the ongoing discrimination and violation of human rights that many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children face today.

“It has been 20 years since the *Bringing them Home* report, and still so many of the recommendations remain unimplemented,” said Muriel Bamblett, SNAICC Chairperson. “Our children are the most important thing, and the lack of action means that too many continue to have contact with out-of-home care, and juvenile justice, and criminal justice.”

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are more than 10 times more likely to be removed from their families than other Australian children. Our children are only half as likely as other children to access early years education, missing out on learning at the very start of their lives.

“We have families who have experienced poverty, homelessness, family violence, forced removal for generations upon generations,” said Ms Bamblett. “That intergenerational trauma has a profound impact on our children.

“In recent weeks we’ve seen the suicides of multiple Aboriginal children, which is absolutely heartbreaking, yet we haven’t seen any real response, or real action,” said

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Ms Bamblett.

“These are the devastating realities that our children face. Clearly a change in approach is urgently needed, and involving Aboriginal people in that change process is the only way it’s going to work.”

SNAICC has been calling for action to address these issues with clear national targets and cross-governmental strategies through the refresh to the Closing the Gap strategy, and the launch of the Fourth Action Plan under the National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children.

SNAICC calls on all Australian governments to work in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities through these processes to secure equality for all Australian children.

ENDS/

For more information please visit www.snaicc.org.au or, to organise an interview with SNAICC Chair Muriel Bamblett, contact:

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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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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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