



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

Thursday 22 August

**STATEMENT:
SNAICC PAYS TRIBUTE TO 'NANNA' NINGALI LAWFORD-WOLF –
AMBASSADOR OF CHILDREN'S DAY 2019**

SNAICC – National Voice for our Children was shocked and saddened by the recent sudden passing of Wangkatjungka woman Ningali Lawford-Wolf while on tour in Scotland for the theatre performance of *The Secret River*.

A Wangkatjungka woman born under a tree at Christmas Creek Station in the far north Kimberley region of Western Australia, Ningali was fortunate to grow up on Country. As a loving mother of five children, and grandmother to two, Ningali embraced the importance of family and community.

[Beginning her career as a dancer](#) with Sydney's Aboriginal Dance Theatre before moving on to work with Bangarra Dance Theatre, Ningali soon became renowned for her outstanding performances in theatre, TV and film, including *Rabbit Proof Fence* and *Bran Nue Dae*.

SNAICC this year was proud to have Ningali as the voice of Nanna in the highly successful children's TV series, *Little J & Big Cuz* and as our Ambassador for National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day 2019.

Ningali's passion and love of culture inspired Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to celebrate the importance of playing, learning and belonging.

Recently we spoke to Ningali on what playing, learning and belonging meant to her:

"When I was a young child I was very lucky that I didn't speak English. I spoke my traditional language, Walmajarri. When I first went to kindy I was fascinated with the pictures and the books and other toys that I hadn't played with before. It prompted me to want to learn more about other places and people and languages. So I had a fantastic time in my early years growing up, going to kindy and going to school. I think it's vital for our children to get an education and learn in those early years. It prepares you for the future."

– Ningali Lawford-Wolf, opinion editorial in the *Koori Mail* (31 July 2019)

Muriel Bamblett, SNAICC Chairperson says,

"Ningali was an inspiring and talented woman who will always be remembered, not only for her passionate performances, but for celebrating our culture and inspiring our children. Our

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thoughts are with her family and friends as we remember Ningali's contribution to the hearts and minds of all Australians for today we have lost a truly amazing woman."

ENDS/

This statement was approved for publication by Ningali's family.

For more information please 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.

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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