



SNAICC
National Voice for our Children

Identifying Good Practice in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Led Early Intervention and Prevention

Expression of Interest Guidelines

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1. Overview

SNAICC is undertaking a project to identify good practice examples of Early Intervention and Prevention work led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations. This work is funded by the Department of Social Services to support priorities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children under the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children. The purpose of this work is to:

- increase support for and resourcing of good practice Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led prevention approaches
- increase engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families with culturally safe and appropriate support services
- promote improved compliance with the prevention element of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (ATSICPP) across all jurisdictions.

To achieve this, SNAICC is seeking expressions of interest from Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations that are implementing good practice early intervention and prevention initiatives targeted for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.

Good practice examples are sought from a mix of urban, regional and remote areas from across Australia. The project is limited to programs that are led by Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations in the child and family support sector. Once good practice examples are identified, SNAICC will work in partnership with organisations to develop a detailed profile of each program example. Good practice examples will be showcased nationally via SNAICC and the Department of Social Services' communications channels, and successful organisations will have the opportunity to showcase their work at the next national SNAICC conference in 2021.

The Family Matters Roadmap report (released in September 2017), confirmed recurrent expenditure on child protection and family support services in Australia had reached \$4.3 billion, of which \$3.6 billion was being spent on statutory child protection and out-of-home care (Australian Institute of Family Studies 2016). At the time of that report, very modest proportional investments were being made in early intervention and prevention initiatives. We must get better at identifying good practice and strengthening our evaluation methods so that we can scale up investment and focus on early intervention and prevention models that support families and children to thrive. Early investment in strengthening families provides long-term social and economic benefits by interrupting trajectories that lead to health problems, criminalisation, and child protection intervention (Fox et al. 2015).

2. Early intervention definition and scope

The good practice examples will be selected with consideration to their alignment with the five elements of the ATSICPP, with emphasis on the Prevention element.

The Prevention element encompasses:

- primary prevention activities that improve the health and wellbeing of children, families and communities; and

- early intervention or secondary level activities, that provide family support services for children and families who are experiencing vulnerabilities or facing personal or social barriers in meeting their children's needs.

More information about the five elements of the ATSICPP can be found here: <https://www.snaicc.org.au/the-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-child-placement-principle-a-guide-to-support-implementation/>

Primary prevention

Primary prevention (primary level) which includes services and activities that are universal with a whole-of-community focus that aim to prevent child maltreatment via programs and resources to improve the health, safety and wellbeing of children, families and communities. Primary prevention involves population-level strategies that are universally available to all families and include a range of health services, early childhood education and care, primary and secondary school education, employment and housing

Early intervention

Early intervention (secondary level) which includes services and activities that are targeted for groups or individuals experiencing disadvantage and aim to enhance family functioning and increase parental skills and knowledge to prevent maltreatment occurring. Early intervention involves family support services targeted at families that may be experiencing challenges in caring for children or showing early signs that problems may arise. The 'early' in early intervention means both early in the child's life and at the early stages of a problem emerging. The aim of early intervention is to reduce risks for families experiencing vulnerabilities, meet unmet needs, and resolve problems at an early stage.

3. Identifying good practice examples

SNAICC will convene an independent assessment panel to review and determine the Expressions of Interest. Rather than a strict selection criterion, the assessment panel will bear in mind the following key considerations in determining programs that will be included within scope:

Is the program Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-owned and led?

- *Is the leading organisation owned, driven and empowered by the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community?*
- *Does the lead organisation employ Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander staff?*
- *Are there mechanisms in place that empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to be involved in decision-making?*
- *Has the program been designed in consultation with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community?*

Does the program recognise the importance of culture?

- *Is the lead organisation aware of the unique cultures, histories and lived experiences of the families that the service is seeking to support?*

- Does the program seek to strengthen cultural identity and connection for children?
- Is the program administered by culturally competent staff?

Does the program respond to the holistic needs of children and families?

- Does the program comprehensively assess the needs of children and families?
- Does the lead organisation work flexibly according to local priorities and needs?
- Are referrals offered to specialist services outside of the scope of the program itself?

Does the program focus on building trust with children and families?

- Does the program focus on ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families participate in and have control over decisions that affect their children?
- Does the lead organisation adopt effective and culturally appropriate family engagement strategies?
- Does the program seek to support, heal and strengthen families?

Is the program administered by culturally competent staff?

- Is the program run by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff?
- Do non-Aboriginal staff participate in cultural competency training and/or assessment?

Is the program having a positive impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families?

- Have children and families reported better outcomes as a result of their engagement in the program?
- Is there data or evidence to support positive outcomes?
- Has the program been evaluated?

4. EOI Assessment Process and Timeline

Process	Timeframe
SNAICC advertises EOIs	Advertised on 14 September 2020
EOI application period	EOI closes on 9 October 2020
SNAICC assesses EOIs	Assessment panel convenes on week commencing 19 October 2020
Outcome of EOI assessment is announced	Announced on 26 October 2020
SNAICC undertakes preliminary consultations with successful organisations	November - December 2020

SNAICC undertakes face to face engagement with successful organisations to develop profiles	From January - February 2021
SNAICC drafts profiles for each good practice example (this will be done in partnership with each organisation, ensuring that they are satisfied with the quality and content of the profile)	March 2021
SNAICC and DSS publish the profiles on respective websites and a final report is released	Before 30 June 2021

5. Key contacts

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6. Attachments

EOI Application Form