



SNAICC – National Voice for our Children
(Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation)
Level 7, Melbourne Polytechnic (Collingwood)
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SNAICC STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO SUNRISE APOLOGY – ADOPTION IS NEVER THE ANSWER

SNAICC – National Voice for our Children welcomes the official apology from Channel 7 Sunrise over comments made by commentators regarding the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families and communities.

SNAICC CEO Richard Weston said,

“The comments made in March 2018 implying that the Stolen Generation was necessary and needed to happen again is deeply hurtful to members of the Stolen Generations, and offensive to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people generally. They were ill-informed remarks, unworthy of any Australian media outlet.

“It is an accepted fact that the impact of tearing children from their families and communities has caused profound hurt and trauma for our Stolen Generations, and that impact is intergenerational. This history is no longer contested ground.”

SNAICC leads the Family Matters campaign with a coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders in child and family welfare. The campaign aims to eliminate the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care.

The Family Matters Report 2020 reveals that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are 9.7 times more likely to be removed from their parents than non-Indigenous children and represent 37% of the total population of all children in out-of-home care – a staggering 20,077 children – but are only 6% of the total population of children in Australia.

The report also shows a concerning trend towards permanent placement and a rise in adoptions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

A worrying 81% (16,287) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care are living permanently away from their birth parents until the age of 18 years.

In 2018-19, there were 19 adoptions. Of these, 95% of adoptions of our children have been to non-Indigenous carers, and all occurred in New South Wales and Victoria.

Family Matters Co-Chair, Sue-Anne Hunter said,

“Permanently removing our children from their family and ties to community is not the answer to a happy, healthy and safe upbringing.

“The concerning trend towards permanent removal in New South Wales and Victoria threatens the connection for those children to culture and kin that is so essential for a child’s sense of identity and belonging.

“Adoption is never the answer for our children. There is a worrying trajectory towards youth justice for many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, particularly those in out-of-home care. Instead we need to focus on supporting our children and families with trauma healing as well as greater investment in family support services.

“Misleading comments is not helpful for our communities, and our media has a responsibility to uphold the rights of our children.”

– Sue-Anne Hunter, Family Matters Co-Chair
Wurundjeri and Ngurai illum wurrung

ENDS/

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About SNAICC – National Voice for our Children

SNAICC – National Voice for our Children is the national non-government peak body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. SNAICC works for the fulfilment of the rights of our children to ensure their safety, development and wellbeing.

Founded in 1981, SNAICC was called Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care until it was changed to SNAICC – National Voice for our Children.

About Family Matters

Family Matters is Australia’s national campaign to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people grow up safe and cared for in family, community, and culture.

The Family Matters campaign aims to eliminate the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care by 2040.

The campaign is driven by a national Family Matters Leadership Group and supported by a Strategic Alliance.

Join us on social media and find out more at
www.snaicc.org.au and www.familymatters.org.au

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