



SNAICC – National Voice for our Children  
(Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation)  
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12 May 2021

## **FEDERAL BUDGET 2021: SUPPORT FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CHILDREN AND FAMILIES BUT CLOSING THE GAP COMMITMENT IS ESSENTIAL**

SNAICC – the national peak body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, welcomes investment to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families in the Australian Government’s recent Budget announcement, but looks forward to further commitments for our children and families through the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap*.

“The Budget includes important new measures for children and families, including increased investment in early childhood education and care, keeping women and children safe, mental health and suicide prevention, and increased support for victims and survivors of child sexual abuse.

“However, more work is needed to achieve the ambitious targets for our children in the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap*,” said SNAICC CEO Catherine Liddle.

“Our children thrive when they have the opportunities to be proud in their identities and cultures and grow up safe and supported within their families and communities.

“In line with the National Agreement, funding must go to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled early childhood and family support services that are best placed to provide quality and culturally safe services for our families.

“While the new investment in family violence prevention is very welcome, there must be broader investment in prevention and early intervention focused family services to address the rising rate of over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care.”

SNAICC, a member of the Coalition of Peaks and Joint Council on Closing the Gap, welcomes the promise of specific funding allocated to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations after the Federal Cabinet considers the Commonwealth’s Jurisdictional Implementation Plan in the middle of 2021.

“It is a wait and see situation on whether we, and other essential Aboriginal-led organisations, can be supported to deliver better services for our children and families,” Catherine said.

The promise of increased subsidies for families with two or more children in child care will help to make child care more affordable and accessible for many families, however it leaves out families with only one child under five, and it doesn’t remove many other barriers that limit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children’s access to early education and care.

One of those barriers is the activity test required for people to access early childhood education and care. The test continues to exclude children from early education when parents and carers do not meet minimum work or study requirements.

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“The extra support for families on low- and middle-income will certainly help some families, but not all. It is integral that the Australian Government invests more in quality early education and care, scrap the ‘activity test’ and remove barriers to ensure access to 30 hours of free or heavily subsidised care for our children each week.”

– Catherine Liddle, SNAICC CEO

**ENDS/**

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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 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.