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MEDIA RELEASE
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A NEW PARTNERSHIP FOR SNAICC AND LIFE WITHOUT BARRIERS TO TRANSFER OUT-OF-HOME CARE SERVICES TO ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMUNITIES

SNAICC and Life Without Barriers are pleased to announce a new partnership that will support an historic commitment from Life Without Barriers to transfer its out-of-home care services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-control within 10 years.

“The future of decision-making about the safety and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children is community-controlled. Our communities are the experts. We know that culturally-appropriate services designed, led and delivered by our services, get better outcomes,” SNAICC CEO Catherine Liddle said.

“We are pleased to work alongside Life Without Barriers through a framework that enshrines the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap*, and we look forward to this setting a precedent for future service delivery,” Ms Liddle said.

“As we observe the distressing rates of Aboriginal children entering care, our organisation and Board are clear that we must make this commitment to children and their families if we are ever to realise giant steps towards Reconciliation. We are grateful to our partnership with SNAICC and First Nations peoples to understand the most effective way we strengthen families to stay together with their children,” Claire Robbs Life Without Barriers Chief Executive said.

“Through our upcoming Reconciliation Action Plan, we are committed to be responsive and courageous so that self-determination can flourish. The need for courage is most evident in the deeply troubling over-representation of First Nations children in the child protection system,” said Natalie Walker, Director, Life Without Barriers Board.

Life Without Barriers has committed to transition out of the provision of out-of-home care services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children within the next 10 years.

With more than 20,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care, significant steps are required to reach the Closing the Gap target of reducing the over-representation of our children in out-of-home care to 45% by 2031. Currently this target is not on track to be met.

By supporting our children to be strong in culture, Life Without Barriers believes the initiative will also serve to support the sector on a much wider scale.

“SNAICC, as a member of the Coalition of Peaks, hopes this is the first of many initiatives that demonstrates genuine commitment to the priority reforms. We look forward to working with Life Without Barriers to keep our children front and centre of decision-making.”

Catherine Liddle, CEO SNAICC – National Voice for our Children
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About Life Without Barriers

Life Without Barriers supports approximately 25,000 people every year in more than 400 communities across Australia

Our purpose is to partner with people to change lives for the better. With a values-led approach, we offer services to people with disability, children, young people and families, older Australians and refugees and people seeking asylum.

www.lwb.org.au

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 40 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.

For more information, please visit www.snaicc.org.au and www.familymatters.org.au