



SNAICC – National Voice for our Children
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MEDIA RELEASE

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JOBS SUMMIT MUST ADDRESS EARLY EDUCATION AND CARE BARRIERS FOR FIRST NATIONS WORKERS

Tomorrow's Jobs and Skills Summit must address barriers such as access to childcare that prevent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from engaging in employment and training.

SNAICC – National Voice for Our Children CEO Catherine Liddle said the Summit must look beyond quick fixes for current workforce shortages.

“The Federal Government’s commitment to childcare reform is welcome but if Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are going to play a full and equitable role in the economy, simply implementing cheaper care cannot be the only answer,” Ms Liddle said.

“Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have much higher unemployment than non-Indigenous Australians.

“In 2018, the Indigenous employment rate was 49 per cent compared to around 75 per cent for non-Indigenous Australians. This gap widens the more remote you go.

“Remote regions also suffer the most from lack of access to early education and care places.

“Many parents and carers who want to take up work and training in regional and remote communities cannot because there are no childcare services in their area.

“Women are especially impacted by this, limiting job prospects, entrenching poverty and putting pressure on extended family members to care for children.

“Children miss out on early years education, increasing gaps in developmental readiness for school.

“The federal childcare funding model must be reformed to increase access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to culturally appropriate education and care.

“Removing the childcare activity test, which unfairly impacts Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, is critical if we are to have the same opportunities to participate economically and ensure universal access means what it says – a fair system that benefits everyone.”

Women in the Anmatjere region in the Northern Territory have joined forces with SNAICC to highlight how having no access to childcare impacts their families and community. They hope their story will be heard at the Jobs Summit.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ot8Z0rWbl0&t=18s>

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