

MEDIA RELEASE

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SUPPORT FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER WORKFORCE WELCOME

SNAICC – National Voice for our Children welcomes the Albanese Labor Government’s \$72.4 million investment over five years to support the skills and training of workers in the early childhood education and care sector.

CEO Catherine Liddle said SNAICC had been calling for greater support for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander early years sector and workforce for many years and this Federal Budget commitment would particularly assist centres in the rural and remote regions.

“Community-controlled early years services have long been advocating for greater focus on planning and investment to build the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce for child and family service delivery across the country.

“Our Sector Strengthening Plan, developed in partnership with all Australian Governments and released in late 2021, identifies workforce attraction, retention and qualification development as major challenges for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander early years services.

“This is particularly the case for regional and remote services that are often reliant on an external workforce, with limited opportunity and support for the development of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff who have the requisite cultural knowledge, community connections and skills, and the long-term commitment to supporting their community.

“The funding support announced today will help local staff build their skills and formal qualifications and keep the doors of centres open while staff are doing this.

“Too many early childhood centres have to close down if staff have to leave town to train or take advantage of professional development opportunities, impacting on families across the community.

“SNAICC hopes this funding will go a long way to keeping services operational while staff train.”

Ms Liddle said SNAICC was currently finalising a workforce development strategy that aimed to improve access to culturally safe training and professional development, and increased recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander early childhood workers.

“The early childhood sector offers important job opportunities, particularly in remote regions.

“As an example, we have been talking to the Federal Government about options presented by CDP reform to grow and develop the remote local childcare workforce.

“SNAICC will be watching next week’s Federal Budget with interest for more commitments around early years education care, particularly around our calls to scrap the Childcare Activity Test.”

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