

MEDIA RELEASE

12 July 2023

CHILDREN FALLING THROUGH THE CRACKS IN CLOSING THE GAP

Today's Closing the Gap data report demonstrates the status quo is failing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and children.

The Productivity Commission today released its third Annual Data Compilation Report, providing a snapshot of progress against the targets and indicators in the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

SNAICC CEO Catherine Liddle said the report made grim reading.

“More and more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are being removed from families and put into out-of-home care. Fewer children are developmentally on track when starting school,” Ms Liddle said.

“Alarming, our children are being driven backwards and the gap is becoming a chasm. Only four of the 19 Closing the Gap targets are on track.

“As a founding member of the Coalition of Peaks, SNAICC entered into the National Agreement with hope and the drive to make real change. But our ambition and enthusiasm is not being matched by Governments.

“Where we are seeing progress it's encouraging but it's not happening at the scale required for genuine reform.

“We know change takes time, but it's been four years since we signed the National Partnership Agreement. Reform is happening at a snail's pace and governments have to pick up the momentum.”

Ms Liddle said the Productivity Commission highlighted the need for more action across many areas, so governments could be held accountable and any progress measured.

“At the moment there are too many blind spots. The National Agreement was meant to transform the way governments work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, but progress is too slow and too patchy.

“Australia needs to do things differently if Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are going to have a brighter future.

“Just letting us sit at the table is not enough to drive the change we need. Listen to our solutions to improve the lives of our children and families. And work with us to make the change a reality.”

The Productivity Commission report can be found here <https://www.pc.gov.au/closing-the-gap-data/annual-data-report>

Please contact Mandy Taylor 0414 634 159 or media@snaicc.org.au.