

MEDIA RELEASE

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NATIONAL COMMISSIONER A GAME CHANGER FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

The Federal Government's commitment to establish a National Commissioner will be a game changer for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.

SNAICC CEO Catherine Liddle congratulated the Federal Government for its commitment to establish the role, which will focus on advocating for evidence-based change to policies and systems that will ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children grow up safe, connected to their family and cultural identity.

“Our sector and our communities have been calling for a National Commissioner for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children for many years, to tackle the over-representation of young people in out-of-home care and youth detention,” Ms Liddle said.

“The National Commissioner will be the champion, the voice and facilitator for our children, young people and families, and who will hold governments to account.

“They will help turn the tide of our children being over-represented in out-of-home care, and one of the key targets under Closing the Gap.

“They will be able to investigate and make strong recommendations on issues impacting our children, ensuring their safety and rights are upheld.

“Our sector has consistently said the most effective and immediate action Government can take to make children safe and protect their human rights is to stand up a National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Commissioner, with the legislated power to investigate and make recommendations on issues impacting our children.”

“The National Agreement on Closing the Gap has given us the leverage and mechanism to finally make this a reality.

“Working through mechanisms such as *Safe and Supported: the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children*, a ground-breaking commitment to shared decision-making, has enabled the ambition of many years to finally be realised.

“It shows these reforms at a national level can drive meaningful change.”

Ms Liddle said similar independent and empowered roles must be present in every jurisdiction, providing a national system of oversight to uphold the rights and interests of our children.

“This significant commitment to our children should have bi-partisan support nationally and in all states and territories. Our children deserve this.”

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