

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Early Years Strategy supports vital role of Aboriginal early years services**

SNAICC – National Voice for our Children welcomes the Federal Government’s commitment to ensuring universal access to quality early childhood education and care (ECEC) with the release today of the first Early Years Strategy (EYS).

SNAICC CEO Catherine Liddle, who was a member of the EYS Advisory Panel, said the strategy recognised the importance of Aboriginal community-controlled organisations in delivering services that ensure thriving children, families and communities.

“Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and organisations now look forward to seeing fully resourced action to realise the vision of the EYS,” Ms Liddle said.

“It is positive to see the EYS acknowledge the need for further changes to the Activity Test for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to make ECEC services more accessible and affordable.

“The EYS aligns with and supports important policies and commitments such as the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Early Years Strategy, sector strengthening plans, and other projects.

“SNAICC and the Aboriginal community-controlled (ACCO) sector have done an enormous amount of work over the years, informed by community, about what needs to be done and what makes the difference in setting up children and families to thrive in the early years.

“We look forward to seeing the action and commitments that will deliver on the promise of these policies and break down the barriers that face Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in accessing quality ECEC and support services.

“Our ACCO services play a vital role in providing wider supports to children and families, providing safe spaces, links to service provision, assistance with navigating systems and access. They provide that critical connection to family, community, and country so our children can thrive in their culture.

“The EYS goal for all families to have access to high-quality, affordable and integrated services for maternal and child health, parenting support and early learning is precisely the ACCO model SNAICC has been advocating for many years.

“Closing the gap starts with our children.

“We must have a shared decision-making process between Government, SNAICC and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peaks to develop the EYS action plans and make the commitments a reality that will drive the change for our children and families to thrive.”

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