

MEDIA RELEASE

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NAPLAN results highlight need for early years and transition to school support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

The importance of access to appropriate early education and care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children has been highlighted by the 2024 NAPLAN test results.

They reveal Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are failing at four times the rate of non-Indigenous classmates. Up to 90 per cent of students in remote communities are failing to reach minimum standards of literacy and numeracy.

SNAICC CEO Catherine Liddle said the results should be a wake-up call to all those in charge of Australian education systems.

“The tragedy is we know what works. Improving educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children starts in the early years.

“We know our children are nearly twice as likely to be falling behind in their developmental milestones than other children when they start school. That only makes it more difficult on that child and educators to get our children meeting NAPLAN standards,” Ms Liddle said.

“This is evidenced by this year’s results showing three out of four Indigenous children in remote communities require remedial intervention.

“I echo the comments today from the Federal Education Minister, Jason Clare – ‘your chances in life shouldn’t depend on your parents’ pay packet or the colour of your skin’, but these results show that’s still the case.

“We need to look at what works best to close the gap on education outcomes for our children, and that means working with the Aboriginal community-controlled (ACCO) sector to increase access to early childhood education and services.

“Programs such as Early Years Support, a pilot program supporting ACCO early education and care centres, need sustained funding. This program has had great success yet funding runs out at the end of the year.

“Where Governments are working in genuine partnership with ACCO’s, we are seeing positive results and improved life outcomes for our children.

“Recognising our expertise by supporting our community-controlled services is the only way we will close the gap.”

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