

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Child protection inquiry must consider overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children**

SNAICC National Voice for our Children said it is critical that any inquiry into the Queensland Government's child protection system takes into account the gross overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the system and the underlying issues leading to more children entering care.

According to the Family Matters report, Queensland has seen a continued increase in the rate of overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care (OOHC), reflecting an increase of 13% compared to three years ago.

Catherine Liddle, CEO of SNAICC – National Voice for our Children, said failing to consider the needs and pressing challenges faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families when they come into contact with the state's child protection system would be an oversight.

"The broad terms of reference released yesterday had no mention of one of the most pressing issues across child protection nationally – the glaring and increasing overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the system," Ms Liddle said.

"We know when our children encounter the system in Queensland, they are more likely to be subjected to serious harm.

"Any inquiry into the child protection system must consider their safety, first and foremost – not cutting costs.

"Evidence shows when OOHC services are delivered by Aboriginal community-controlled organisations (ACCOs), our children are not only safer, but they are also more likely to be placed with kin or be restored back with their family.

"Keeping children safe means reversing the current trend of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children entering OOHC and investing in culturally informed early intervention and family supports that address the issues that are leading more and more children into this broken system."

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For all media queries, please contact Charlie Bowcock on 0417 042 308 or [media@snaicc.org.au](mailto:media@snaicc.org.au).