

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **NSW Commended for Investment in OOHC and Closing the Gap**

In a landmark move, the NSW Government will direct nearly \$350 million to Aboriginal community-controlled organisations (ACCOs) to help keep families together and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children out of the child protection system.

Catherine Liddle, CEO of SNAICC, said this is the kind of action that SNAICC has been calling for to address the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in care.

“This is a turning point,” Ms. Liddle said. “For decades, we’ve been telling governments that Aboriginal-led solutions work. NSW has finally put serious dollars behind that truth.

“By working in partnership with state peak bodies and ACCOs this announcement represents a significant step towards working in true partnership with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

“It acknowledges what we have known for decades - that our ACCOs are best-placed to support Aboriginal children and families to stay safely together.

“By backing community-led services, the NSW government is changing the way they do business with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

“We know that’s key to changing and accelerating progress towards the targets in Closing the Gap. We have seen that work in action on other targets, and now we’re seeing a significant step towards addressing the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care (OOHC) in NSW.

SNAICC is also enthusiastic about the program’s focus on preventing children from entering the foster care system and supporting families in the home environment.

“Evidence shows that ACCO-led prevention programs and family supports are key to addressing the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in OOHC.

“NSW has set a new national benchmark,” said Ms. Liddle. “Now it’s time for every other state and territory to step up—or risk leaving their most vulnerable children behind.”

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