

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Real Reform is Key to Safer Early Education

SNAICC – National Voice for our Children welcomes new Federal child safety legislation but warns against adding administrative burden without addressing the deeper problems in our early childhood education and care (ECEC) system.

SNAICC CEO Catherine Liddle said legislative efforts to strengthen child safety in the ECEC sector are critical, but they must address the wider structural issues driving risk in the sector.

“SNAICC urges the government to take the opportunity now to implement long-term solutions and real reform of the system,” Ms Liddle said.

“Imposing new regulations involving fines and funding cuts are only one part of the systematic change that is necessary to drive improvements in safety and quality issues in early education.

“We need to deal with the root causes of this system such as workforce shortages, inequitable and difficult access to services and a funding model that incentivises profit over care.”

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has stated that he wants universal access to an affordable early childhood education system to be his legacy.

“That means being bold and ambitious about fundamentally changing the way early education and care is delivered in Australia by moving toward a true universally accessible system, not one-size-fits-all approach,” Ms Liddle said.

“The workforce shortages alongside the current for-profit model leaves gaps in access and quality, particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, while placing increasing pressure on educators and families.

“We need to be looking towards the unique expertise and supporting the needs of the services that do it best.

“The Aboriginal community-controlled early years sector continues to show what is possible by delivering culturally safe, high-quality education and care for our children.

“The ACCO funding model that is supported by SNAICC and all its members demonstrates how we can have a safer, accessible early education system that has the flexibility to deliver early education in a way that serves the individual and unique needs of their families and communities.

“We call on the Federal Government to seize this opportunity for real reform for our children.”

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