

MEDIA RELEASE

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Our children pay the price of racism online

SNAICC – National Voice for our Children has outlined that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people are experiencing increased racism, including online, in its submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Racism, Hate and Violence directed at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The submission outlines that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Young people can experience racism in many of the spaces that they live their lives every day with data showing almost a third of reported incidents of racism against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people occurs online or through other media.

Catherine Liddle, CEO of SNAICC – National Voice for our Children, said that given how proliferate the online trolling continues to be for our children, we welcome the establishment of the Inquiry and the opportunity it creates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices to be heard on the racism, hate and violence our communities continue to face.

“What our children are experiencing online goes beyond random trolling. It is increasingly organised, coordinated and deliberate,” Ms Liddle said.

“What we are seeing more and more, particularly with state and federal election cycles is our politicians using issues about our children as political fodder, that rhetoric is setting headlines and those headlines are setting off the trolls.

“Those trolls follow our children into their home, into their feeds and into their schoolyards and that’s having a huge impact.”

SNAICC has also seen a significant rise in targeted attacks on its own social media over the past 18 months. Since the 2023 Voice Referendum, this commentary has become more organised and deliberate, with coordinated groups using coded language to evade moderation and intensifying activity around election periods.

“The damage has lifelong consequences. Our children deserve to grow up safe, strong and proud of who they are, not to have their safety and identity debated.

“Governments need to name racism for what it is, and act. Before it’s too late. Because closing the gap starts with our children.

Among its recommendations, SNAICC calls on governments to establish strengths-based, evidence-informed standards for political and media discourse, including examining the role of social media in driving and amplifying racism and holding platforms accountable for harmful racist commentary.

SNAICC stands ready to work with the Federal Government to address Racism, Hate and Violence directed at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families and communities.

Read SNAICC's full submission here: <https://www.snaicc.org.au/resources/submission-to-the-parliamentary-inquiry-into-racism-hate-and-violence-directed-at-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-people/>

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