

MEDIA RELEASE

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Landmark report reveals how governments can change the trajectory for Aboriginal children by funding what works

Governments have a clear opportunity to transform outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families by fundamentally changing the way they fund Aboriginal community-controlled organisations (ACCOs), according to a landmark new report released today by SNAICC – National Voice for our Children.

Doing Things Differently: Funding ACCOs to keep families together sets out a practical, evidence-informed funding model designed to ensure ACCOs delivering child and family services are funded in a way that reflects how they work, supports long-term sustainability, and delivers better outcomes for children and families.

Catherine Liddle, CEO of SNAICC said the report comes at a critical time, with the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in child protection continuing to move in the wrong direction.

“While we have seen an increasing recognition of the important role of community-controlled services, current funding systems continue to be designed for mainstream organisations, creating unnecessary complexity, unnecessary administrative burden, inflexible funding arrangements and chronic underinvestment that limits ACCOs' ability to respond to the needs of their communities.

“This report shows how this mismatch is preventing governments from achieving change at the scale needed and failing to have the adequate services in place to invest in families where it counts.

“Every year governments spend billions responding to children and families once they have reached crisis yet Closing the Gap targets continue to stall and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children remain overrepresented in child protection systems.

“Our organisations don't deliver services in the same way as mainstream providers. We provide comprehensive, culturally safe support that is shaped by and trusted within the communities they serve and that's exactly why they achieve such strong outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.

“Lasting change can come if we shift investment into Aboriginal community-controlled organisations that work with families early, before crisis occurs.”

The model presents a guaranteed funding floor for every ACCO, providing the certainty needed to maintain a skilled workforce and core service capacity regardless of fluctuations

in demand. It is complemented by a needs-based funding component that responds to community size, location and levels of community complexity and need.

Ms Liddle said implementing the report's recommendations represents an immediate opportunity for governments to make lasting change.

"If governments are serious about Closing the Gap, they cannot keep funding the same systems and expect different results.

"They are wasting money and continuing to damage our children and families.

"This report provides a practical roadmap that governments could implement today to support stronger families, keep children safe and connected to culture, and move the Closing the Gap targets in the right direction."

Access the report here - <https://www.snaicc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/Doing-things-differently-Funding-ACCOs-to-keep-families-together.pdf>

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