

Media Release

Senator Rachel Siewert - Australian Greens spokesperson on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues

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Child mortality no longer on track as Government continues rhetoric to close the gap

The [Close the Gap](#) report now showing that child mortality rates are not on track is a dismal reflection on the Government's half-hearted and under-funded attempts to end Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage.

"One of the targets is on track to Close the Gap for our First Peoples. Just one. How has the Government let it get to this stage?"

"I have witnessed many Closing the Gap reports in my time as a Senator but this year's report is particularly devastating. Unfortunately it is not surprising.

"When they ripped half a billion dollars out of the sector, leaders, Aboriginal organisations and service deliverers knew the impacts would be real. This is now reflected in this report. This highlights why the Government needs to adopt the Redfern Statement's Engagement Approach.

"Falling behind on child mortality rates means that the Government's failure to act in this space is costing lives.

"We've also gone backwards when it comes to Aboriginal kids' reading and numeracy. Only year 9 numeracy is on track, which means those kids are getting poor outcomes just when they're starting off in life.

"Rather than another year of rhetoric, I urge the Prime Minister to reinstate the half billion ripped out of the sector in the 2014 budget so that the Redfern Statement's key priority areas outlined today can serve as a solid foundation for resetting efforts to close the gap.

"We also desperately need justice targets. Incarceration rates for our First Peoples are still appalling, it urgently needs addressing.

"Aboriginal peoples have the solutions. We must listen before things get even worse".

Nadine Walker

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