



Media release

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10-YEAR NATIONAL FRAMEWORK: PROMISING TRANSFORMATION FOR OUR CHILDREN

Community Services Ministers have today launched *Safe and Supported: National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021 – 2031*, Australia's next 10-year framework to respond to the needs of children and families experiencing vulnerability.

As shown in [The Family Matters Report 2021](#), launched yesterday, the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care continues to escalate each year.

“This National Framework comes at a critical time. Our children are being removed at an alarming rate, with little hope for reunification and keeping connected to their family, their community, their culture, and their story.

“What we need is transformational reform to turn the tide on child removals. And we are optimistic that this framework has the mechanisms to take action in the right areas by investing in Aboriginal-led solutions,” SNAICC CEO and Family Matters Co-Chair, Catherine Liddle said.

The National Framework marks a fundamental shift in national policy related to child protection. It recognises the right to self-determination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and was developed through a co-design process

with SNAICC and a national leadership group of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child and family sector experts.

The Framework will be critical to achieving Target 12 in the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap*, to reduce the rate of over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care by 45% by 2031.

“The plan acknowledges what we have often heard from our services, practitioners and people on the ground – that to change the way we do things at a systems-level, we must have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices at the table,” Ms Liddle said.

The Framework has committed to “progressive systems transformation that has Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-determination at its centre. This includes taking active steps towards families, communities and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations partnering in child protection system design and administration.”

SNAICC led extensive consultations with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations across the country to inform the framework. Over 200 people took part in our workshops, with 890 people providing input through our online survey. The voices of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are captured in [SNACC’s consultation report](#).

The National Framework commits to reform in each jurisdiction with a view to “fully embedding the five elements of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle” – to keep our children connected to family, community and culture.

It also commits to support delegation of authority in child protection to families, communities and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations.

“With the Closing the Gap agreement and the National Framework, we have the tools to enable change – now we just have to put those tools into action. We must listen to our communities and be bold,” Ms Liddle said.

“As we have showcased in the Family Matters report, Aboriginal-led programs and initiatives are already leading the way in reform for our children and families. Our communities consistently tell us that change is too slow. This is our opportunity to grow our community-led approaches at a larger scale and a faster pace.

“We look forward to keeping our children front and centre as we work together on the National Framework’s five-year Actions Plans to bring these commitments to life.”

– Catherine Liddle, SNAICC CEO

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SNAICC – National Voice for our Children is the national non-government peak body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. SNAICC works for the fulfilment of the rights of our children in particular to ensure their safety, development and wellbeing.

Founded in 1981, SNAICC was called Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care until it was changed to SNAICC – National Voice for our Children.

Over the past 40 years SNAICC's efforts has resulted in many key milestones and achievements both in policy developments at state, territory and federal levels and in developing innovative and useful resources for the sector.

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www.familymatters.org.au