



Media Release

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## Child safety systems fail First Nations women & children surviving domestic & family violence

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders surviving domestic and family violence are not having their needs met by child protection systems reveals a report released today (April 7).

*New Ways for Our Families* is the first of two reports. It shows child protection responses to domestic and family violence must focus on children and women. It also reveals these responses do not adequately address all domestic and family violence issues.

“Despite the overwhelming impact of child protection systems in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people’s lives, often resulting from domestic and family violence, their voices on what will support them have largely been silent,” says Garth Morgan, CEO of the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak.

“To break the cycle of intergenerational trauma, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people need opportunities to heal from experiencing domestic and family violence including being heard.

“Support is also needed for their families and communities to address domestic and family violence in holistic and culturally strong ways to ensure our children and young people can grow up safe and strong in their culture,” says Garth.

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations are best placed to provide child and family services and to support cultural responses they need additional resources says the report. *New Ways for Our Families* shows change should occur within a framework that ensures perpetrators are held accountable for their violence and that women do not shoulder the burden of change.

“No parent, carer or family plans to have their children go into child protection or youth justice,” says Professor Daryl Higgins, Director, Institute of Child Protection Studies, Australian Catholic University.

“Families welcome children into their lives and communities but often the forces of intergenerational trauma affect their ability to offer the best support to their children. And unfortunately, systemic bias and racism just make it harder for them,” says Daryl.

### **Interviews available**

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*New Ways for Our Families: Designing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural practice framework and system responses to address the impacts of domestic and family violence on children and young people* is commissioned by the Australian National Research Organisation for Women’s Safety in conjunction with Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak and Institute of Child Protection Studies, Australian Catholic University.

**Download [New Ways for Our Families](#) report**

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