



SNAICC – National Voice for our Children
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation
First Floor, 27 Budd Street
Collingwood VIC 3066

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HOPE FOR OUR CHILDREN THIS NATIONAL SORRY DAY

On this day 25 years ago the *Bringing Them Home* report was tabled in Federal Parliament, giving voice to Stolen Generations survivors and highlighting the impact of racist government policies and practices.

Today on National Sorry Day we mark this anniversary, acknowledging the role SNAICC played in instigating the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children From Their Families that concluded in 1997.

SNAICC CEO Catherine Liddle said it was an important day to reflect on the continuing unacceptably high rates of children being removed from their families and the ongoing trauma inflicted by these practices.

The 2021 Family Matters report found a staggering 21,523 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were in out-of-home care at 30 June 2020. Governments have committed to reducing the over-representation of our children in out-of-home care by 45% by 2031 through the National Agreement on Closing the Gap – yet according to the report, representation is expected to increase by 54% by 2030.

“More and more of our children are being removed from their families with the over-representation of our children in out-of-home care growing each year,” Ms Liddle said.

“Our children are being taken from families that love them, being disconnected from culture and too often ending up in the justice system.

“After 25 years we are still struggling to get governments to change their approaches, to recognise that underlying systems are stacked against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.

“But this National Sorry Day I have hope that we are starting to see change, that we have commitments that will see Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures and knowledge drive the systems that support our kids’ safety and wellbeing.”

Ms Liddle said Federal, State and Territory Government commitments to the Closing the Gap agreement, the promise of the Uluru Statement, and moves towards real partnerships in decision making were significant.

“These are far from symbolic gestures. They can represent a deeper shift in attitude and practice by governments that actually drive system changes that can turn the tide,” Ms Liddle said.

“Governments have made commitments to invest more in our community controlled approaches, and to transfer authority in child protection to our communities and organisations, but the pace of change remains too slow. It’s time to genuinely put these commitments into action.

“SNAICC will continue to work to hold governments to account, to make sure the voices of our children are heard when decisions are being made that impact their lives, their families, communities and culture.”

Contact: SNAICC Mandy Taylor 0414 634 159