



Media Release

THRIVE BY FIVE BACKS CALL TO GUARANTEE FUNDING FOR INDIGENOUS-LED EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE

26 August 2022 – Minderoo Foundation’s Thrive by Five initiative supports calls made by the [Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care](#) (SNAICC), for the Federal Government to reinstate funding for Indigenous-led child and family centres across Australia.

The [Childcare Deserts and Oasis Report](#), recently completed by the Mitchell Institute, highlights that families located in areas defined as inner regional (42.6 per cent), outer regional (62.6 per cent), remote (87.5 per cent), and outer remote (79.9 per cent) are more likely to be living in a childcare desert compared to families living in major cities.

This lack of early learning and care is exacerbated in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities which is contributing to poorer outcomes for children.

The 2021 National Workforce Census found 3.8 per cent of children attending childcare services in 2021 were Indigenous. While this has increased from 2.1 per cent in 2013, Indigenous children are still underrepresented.^[1]

Thrive by Five Director Jay Weatherill said, “The Federal Government must make funding available to close the gap in early learning and developmental outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

“The circumstances of a child’s birth should not hold back their development or make it tougher for families to access the support they need but alarmingly, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are twice as likely as other children to be developmentally vulnerable when they start school^[2].

“Community-controlled services to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children is a critical component of early learning reform and paves the way for them to have a better start in life,” Mr Weatherill said.

The full Mitchell Institute report and an interactive map with local early learning data searchable by postcode available here:

<https://www.vu.edu.au/mitchell-institute/early-learning/childcare-deserts-oases-how-accessible-is-childcare-in-australia>

Learn more about Early Learning for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children on the SNAICC website:

<https://www.snaicc.org.au/policy-and-research/early-childhood/>

Sources:

1. 2021 National Workforce Census, Department of Education, Australian Government,
<https://www.dese.gov.au/child-care-package/early-childhood-data-and-reports/national-workforce-census>
2. SNAICC – National Voice for Our Children, 2022, Early Childhood,
<https://www.snaicc.org.au/policy-and-research/early-childhood/>

About Minderoo Foundation:

Established by Andrew and Nicola Forrest in 2001, Minderoo Foundation is a modern philanthropic organisation seeking to break down barriers, innovate and drive positive, lasting change. Minderoo Foundation is proudly Australian, with key initiatives spanning from ocean research and ending slavery, to collaboration against cancer and building community projects.

Media contacts:

Zerene Catacutan (Essential Media)
0422 815 248