



SNAICC Media Release

For immediate release

Monday 1 August 2005.

National Aboriginal and Islander Children's Day Thursday 4 August 2005

*'Foster and kinship carers – keeping kids connected to community,
family and culture'*

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations across Australia will celebrate the importance of children to our communities on National Aboriginal and Islander Children's Day, Thursday 4 August 2005.

Ms Muriel Bamblett AM, SNAICC Chairperson, said today, 'This year's theme highlights the significance of foster and kinship carers in our children's lives.'

'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children have an inherent relationship with their land, family and their community that is the foundation of their identity, culture and spirituality. We must ensure that those who care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children – whether they are immediate family or foster or kinship carers – are supported and encouraged to nurture this relationship fully,' she said.

'That is why we are pleased that the Victorian Aboriginal and Child Care Agency has published *Caring for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children in Out of Home Care*. This resource booklet will assist non-Indigenous carers who care for Aboriginal and Islander children in out of home care,' Ms Bamblett said.

The Honourable Sherryl Garbutt MP, the Victorian Minister for Community Services and Minister for Children, will launch the booklet as part of NAICD.

The Launch will be at:

**the Aborigines Advancement League, 2 Watts St, Thornbury
at 11am on Thursday 4 August 2005**

Ms Bamblett said, 'This resource will be the model for a national initiative. We're pleased that government – both state and national – supports initiatives to train and resource foster and kinship carers.'

SNAICC (Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care Inc) started National Aboriginal and Islander Children's Day in 1988 to provide an opportunity for the whole nation to reflect on the importance of nurturing, supporting and caring for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. A range of activities is being held this Thursday, with many services focussing on the important work of foster and kinship carers.

In Hobart, the Aboriginal Children's Centre is holding children's activities that highlight how stories keep children connected to their family, community and culture; in Tennant Creek, the Anyinginyi Health Aboriginal Corporation will hold bush trips to teach children about bush tucker and culture; while in Mackay, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Service is holding a children's 'Day in the Park' with music, cultural dancing, games and activities, and a sausage sizzle.

In Ballina, NSW, the Ballina Fox Street Preschool will hold a barbeque for its children and those from other children's services; and in Western Australia, the Geraldton Regional Aboriginal Medical Service will have a fun in day in the park with a bouncing castle, face painting, games and food.

Media inquiries: please contact Julian Pocock, SNAICC Coordinator:
03 9489 8099 0419 379 764