



**Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care Inc.**

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**Media Statement – 3 August 2006**

**For Immediate Release**

**National Aboriginal and Islander Children's Day – Saturday 4 August**

***Indigenous Culture Strengthens and Heals Indigenous Children Across the Land***

Communities across the country will celebrate National Aboriginal and Islander Children's Day (NAICD) this weekend, putting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and culture at the heart of their communities.

In Port Augusta, South Australia, up to 200 children under 5 years old and their families will enjoy a family fun day held by the Early Years Parenting Centre, with a barbecue, face painting, games, and a 'Sea of Hands' event to bring together Indigenous and non-Indigenous children. Meanwhile, the children and families from Undoonoo Child Care Centre in Woorabinda, Queensland, will parade down the main street to celebrate the day, and enjoy a family barbecue with bush tucker, cultural activities and a traditional dance corroboree at Kangaroo Stadium.

Organised annually by the Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC), the theme for this year's National Aboriginal and Islander Children's Day is 'Raise children strong in culture: pathways to healing and revival'.

SNAICC Chairperson Muriel Bamblett, AM, said today, "For an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child, culture is a source of strength, resilience, happiness, identity and confidence."

"Communities and families that raise their children strong in culture create many pathways to healing and revival: children develop confidence and pride in themselves, their families and their culture; and communities grow in pride and strength," Ms Bamblett said.

Ms Bamblett continued, "Too often in the media, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture is portrayed as the problem underlying the concerns children and families face in our communities. Nothing can be further from the truth."

"This year, Children's Day allows our communities to highlight how important Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children are to us, and what our culture offers them. Parents, grandparents, uncles, aunties, cousins, and other carers will show children the strengths of our culture and spirituality, show pride in their cultural identity and encourage children to do the same," Ms Bamblett said.

In New South Wales, the Narrandera Aboriginal Infants and Mothers Health Service is hosting a children's outing at the local park day with face painting, hand painting on calico, didgeridoo activities, family photos, Wiradjuri singing, and races, in conjunction with local Aboriginal groups and families.

This year, SNAICC is pleased more mainstream services and schools around the country are embracing this celebration. For instance, the South Australian Department of Education and Children's Services and the Victorian Office for Children have distributed SNAICC's NAICD material to early learning centres and kindergartens in each state.

"We welcome initiatives that highlight the importance of raising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children strong in their culture. These are significant steps in a journey of true healing and revival for all Australians," Ms Bamblett said.

SNAICC, the national peak body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families, first initiated National Aboriginal and Islander Children's Day in 1988.

SNAICC gratefully acknowledges the financial contribution of the Australian Government Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs towards funding NAICD posters.

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More information on Children's Day, including activities around the country, is online at [www.snaicc.asn.au/children/](http://www.snaicc.asn.au/children/)

Or from the SNAICC Publications Officer – Mark Lawrence (03) 9489 8099