

SNAICC NATIONAL CONFERENCE

27-29 July 2010, Alice Springs



FOR OUR CHILDREN

Local Strengths,
National Challenges

AMPE ANWERNEKENHEKE

Rlterrke Akwete
Aneye

Media Statement – For Immediate Release – 27 July 2010

Hey politicians! Tell us how you are going to stop the crisis in children's wellbeing

Three of Australia's leading peak, national, not-for-profit organisations – the Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC), the Child and Family Welfare Association of Australia (CAFWAA), and Families Australia – today demanded that all Federal political parties urgently inform the Australian public in the Federal election debate about their plans to fix Australia's crisis in child abuse and neglect.

Speaking at the SNAICC National Conference in Alice Springs, the Chairs of the three organisations highlighted that there are concerns registered about the safety and wellbeing of some 300,000 children around Australia each year, and that the rate of child abuse and neglect substantiations continues to rise nationally.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, in particular, are dramatically over-represented in the child protection system.

According to the three organisations, while some welcome Federal Government attention has focused on the problem through the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children, progress has been slow in making substantive advances to address the longer-term causes and the current alarming rates of child abuse and neglect. The quantum of funds devoted to the Framework's implementation is woefully inadequate.

Viewed from the heart of the Northern Territory, we are seeing a **widening of the gap** for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children across the nation. We need systemic change rather than the stigmatisation of individual families.

SNAICC, CAFWAA and Families Australia call on Federal political parties to announce their plans to break the circuit and solve the crisis for the sake of children and families. We are also looking for the announcement of an Office for Children and Young People and a National Aboriginal Child Safety Commissioner.

Children, the most vulnerable members of our society, cannot wait.

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