



FAMILY MATTERS

Strong communities. Strong culture.
Stronger children.



WHAT IS FAMILY MATTERS?

Family Matters is Australia's national campaign to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people grow up safe and cared for in family, community and culture.

OUR GOAL is to eliminate the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care, by 2040.

Out-of-home care refers to the care of a child outside the parental home, as required by the state government, including foster, residential and kinship care, family group homes and independent living.

Family Matters is led by SNAICC – National Voice for our Children, the national peak body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and supported by a rapidly growing Strategic Alliance of approximately 150 dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous organisations.





OUR CAMPAIGN

Family Matters aims to eliminate the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care, by 2040. Out-of-home care refers to the care of a child outside the parental home, as required by the state government, including foster, residential and kinship care, family group homes and independent living.

When the ground-breaking *Bringing Them Home* report into the stolen generations was released in 1997, mainstream Australia was shocked to learn that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children represented 20% of all children living in out-of-home care.

Now, nearly 20 years later, they are over 35%. Despite numerous legal and policy frameworks protecting the cultural rights of Indigenous children, the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care is almost ten times that of other children, and continues to grow.

1997 | 20% TODAY | 35%

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CHILDREN LIVING IN OUT-OF-HOME CARE

OUR SIX CORE PRINCIPLES

Family Matters operates under six core principles, which underpin all campaign relationships, strategies and activities. These principles are:

- Applying a child-focussed approach
- Ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations participate in and have control over decisions that affect their children
- Protecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's right to live in culture
- Pursuing evidence-based responses
- Supporting, healing and strengthening families
- Challenging systemic racism and inequities

MEASURING SUCCESS – CAMPAIGN SUB-TARGETS

In addition to our overarching goal of eliminating over-representation by 2040, members of the Family Matters campaign are working towards a comprehensive set of short and mid-term targets to indicate improved levels of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child safety and well-being:

1. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to enjoy equal access to early intervention and prevention services as non-Indigenous children by 2020
2. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care to enjoy equal rates of reunification with their parents or family as non-Indigenous children by 2025
3. To eliminate the over-representation in rates of notification of child abuse or neglect of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children by 2030
4. To eliminate the over representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children subject to a substantiation of child abuse or neglect by 2035
5. To eliminate the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children subject to an order of removal into out-of-home care by 2035



CAMPAIGN MEMBERSHIP STRUCTURE

Family Matters has a broad membership of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous non-government organisations. The aim is to draw on the expertise, strengths and passions that every individual and organisation has to share, so that we have a strong, balanced and inclusive campaign capable of achieving its goal.

STRATEGIC ALLIANCE

Members of the Strategic Alliance are organisations committed to the campaign principles, and keen to support the campaign in ways that don't require too much time or commitment. Membership of the Family Matters Strategic Alliance is open to all non-government organisations, including statutory bodies.

CHAMPIONS GROUP

The Champions Group are senior representatives from organisations that are part of the Strategic Alliance, but also have additional leadership roles. The purpose of the Champions Group is to drive the campaign.

JURISDICTIONAL WORKING GROUPS

Members of Family Matters Jurisdictional Working Groups are stakeholders engaged at the state and territory level, to drive change efforts in each jurisdiction in accordance with the Family Matters campaign priorities.

THE FAMILY MATTERS ACTION PLAN

Over the next twelve months, Family Matters will:

DEVELOP AND CEMENT A STRONG INTERNAL CAMPAIGN FOUNDATION

with broad membership of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous organisations from across Australia

LAUNCH THE CAMPAIGN AT A BREAKFAST EVENT

in Parliament House, Canberra, on 9 November

DEVELOP A ROBUST NATIONAL ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CHILD SAFETY & WELLBEING REPORT CARD

to be released at the national campaign launch

PROGRESS OUR CORE CHANGE PRIORITIES, including:

- Ensuring that eliminating the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander in statutory child protection is on the Coalition of Australian Governments (COAG) agenda, and there is bipartisan support for a national, resourced strategy to redress over-representation
- Reforming permanency planning measures in all jurisdictions towards stability for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, with adequate mechanisms to prevent removal and to protect children's right to family and culture
- Increased investment in early intervention to support families and prevent children being placed at risk in the first place
- Investment in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family and community participation in child protection decision-making, and
- Prioritisation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled services in all service provision to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families

HOLD AN INAUGURAL NATIONAL WEEK OF ACTION

from 19-25 May 2016, with strong national media coverage, a flagship event in Melbourne, and at least 100 community events around Australia

ESTABLISH AND SUPPORT ACTIVE JURISDICTIONAL WORKING GROUPS

in all states and territories to progress jurisdictional plans for legal, policy or practice change, to reduce over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care.

BUILDING BLOCKS



1.

All families enjoy access to quality, culturally-safe, universal and targeted services necessary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to thrive



2.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations participate in and have control over decisions that affect their children



3.

Law, policy and practice in child and family welfare are culturally safe and responsive



4.

Governments and services are accountable to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people



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HOW YOU CAN BE INVOLVED

SIGN ON

Sign the Family Matters Statement of Commitment to show your support for the six core principles of our campaign. Visit our website: www.familymatters.org.au/

GET ACTIVE

Get involved in our **NATIONAL WEEK OF ACTION, FROM 19-25 MAY** – make sure to follow us on social media and sign up to our contact lists to be kept informed of what's happening in your local area.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE THROUGH SPONSORSHIP

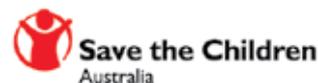
Family Matters is a collaborative campaign. We are always looking for new sponsors and in return for your support your organisation will be recognised at public events and on the campaign website. Please contact us directly for more information.

GET IN TOUCH

Please contact us directly to learn more about Family Matters, to join the campaign or be involved in activities at the local, state, territory or national level:

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FAMILY MATTERS ACKNOWLEDGES OUR PLATINUM CAMPAIGN SPONSORS



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