

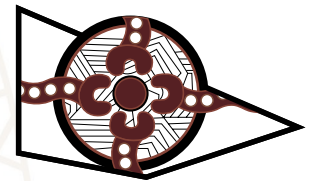


Victorian Aboriginal  
Children & Young  
People's Alliance

27 April 2018

To: Victorian Premier

CC: Jenny Mikakos, Natalie Hutchins, Martin Pakula, Lisa Neville,  
Gayle Tierney, James Merlino, Jill Hennessy



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Dear Premier Andrews,

We write this open letter to congratulate you on the signing of the *Wungurilwil Gaggapduir: Aboriginal Children and Families Agreement* by Minister Jenny Mikakos MP on behalf of your Government in conjunction with the Victorian Aboriginal Children and Young People's Alliance, the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency, and the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare.

This is a significant step towards reducing the number of Aboriginal children in Out of Home Care, currently at a staggering 1800 plus children. As Minister Mikakos noted at the launch for *Wungurilwil Gaggapduir*, this is a national tragedy and should be treated as such. It's unacceptable to have so many Aboriginal children in Out of Home Care.

It was thus heartening to hear Minister Mikakos not only assure our Community that *Wungurilwil Gaggapduir* would not just be a document that sits on the shelf, but that it would also have its agreements funded.

The \$47.3 million committed yesterday by the Victorian Government will help the Aboriginal community controlled sector to support Aboriginal children on protection orders, deliver the services needed to assist Aboriginal families to raise resilient and culturally confident Aboriginal children and young people.

Your funding to strengthen evidence-based policy and practice for services involving Aboriginal families and children, is also most welcome. This will ensure the right policies are written for the best results for Aboriginal families delivered by our Members.

The \$10.8 million you have committed to undertake a Youth Justice Taskforce, with a focus on our young people, and strengthening the Koori Youth Justice program, will help reduce the disproportionately high numbers of Aboriginal young people in detention.

We appreciate that your Government is listening to our Community, and understands the value in self-determination and culturally-safe practices for our people. We hope this continues in perpetuity, giving the coming generations of Aboriginal people in Victoria the opportunity to thrive, connected to their culture and with significantly improved health and wellbeing outcomes.

Yours sincerely,

Karen Heap  
Acting Chair for the Alliance

Ian Hamm  
Chief Executive Officer VACCHO