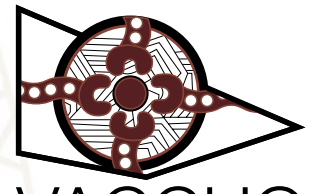




Victorian Aboriginal  
Children & Young  
People's Alliance



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30 November 2017

Premier Daniel Andrews  
Office of the Premier  
1 Treasury Place  
Melbourne, Victoria  
Australia, 3002

Dear Premier,

We write this open letter to thank you for the leadership your Government has taken on *Aboriginal Children in Aboriginal Care* and reducing the number of our children in State care.

The recent announcement of the Australian-first delegation of functions and powers from the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to Aboriginal agencies is a landmark event for our community.

With Aboriginal children ten times more likely to be in care than non-Aboriginal children, it is critical we get right the shift to *Aboriginal Children in Aboriginal Care*.

At the Victorian Community Controlled Health Organisation and the Victorian Aboriginal Children & Young People's Alliance we put a high value on our people living safely in a strong and supportive communities, with access to community controlled, holistic service delivery. This focus will permeate *Aboriginal Children in Aboriginal Care*, and lead to better health and wellbeing outcomes for Aboriginal children and their families.

The commitment through *Aboriginal Children in Aboriginal Care* that Aboriginal children and families will be involved in decision making and that their voice will be respected and heard will ensure our children grow up resilient, with self-belief and identity. And importantly, they will be connected to community and culture.

In addition to thanking you and your Government, we would like to acknowledge the dedication of Professor Muriel Bamblett and the team at the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA) in the leadership they demonstrated in working towards agreement on their Nugel program. VACCA truly led the way for other Aboriginal Community controlled organisations across the state to build their capacity to the point they can undertake Aboriginal Guardianship.

We also welcome the steps to come, including the transition of the resources and care and case management functions of Child Protection, and Bendigo and District Aboriginal Co-operative's completion of their 'as if' pilot, which will see them become the next Aboriginal agency to reach full authorisation under Section 18 of the *Children, Youth and Families Act* (2005).

*Aboriginal Children in Aboriginal Care* will help us avoid another stolen generation of our people, albeit in different form. This is an exciting time and, along with recent work on Treaty, is true testament to the Victorian Government's commitment to reaching the critical state of Aboriginal self-determination.

Yours sincerely,

Jill Gallagher AO  
CEO VACCHO

Michael Bell  
Chairperson Victorian Aboriginal Children and Young People's Alliance