

# Media Release

**The Hon Luke Donnellan MP**  
Minister for Child Protection  
Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers  
Acting Minister for Veterans



Friday, 10 September 2021

## STRENGTHENING CONNECTION TO CULTURE, COUNTRY AND FAMILY

The Victorian Government is increasing the number of Aboriginal organisations authorised to look after children in care, ensuring more Aboriginal children are connected to culture, Country and family.

Minister for Child Protection Luke Donnellan announced at the Aboriginal Children's Forum, held during Child Protection Week, that Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative and Gippsland and East Gippsland Aboriginal Co-Operative will commence pre-authorisation to look after Aboriginal children in care.

They join the two Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations in pre-authorisation, and two already authorised.

The Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency is also expanding their Aboriginal Children in Aboriginal Care team to look after Aboriginal children in care in Morwell.

More authorised care providers will mean more Aboriginal children can be case managed by Aboriginal organisations – because Aboriginal people are best placed to understand the needs of Aboriginal children, giving children better opportunities to lead happy, healthy lives.

Through culturally appropriate, trauma-informed and timely case management, children involved in child protection managed by Aboriginal organisations are returning home sooner, or being placed into stable, culturally safe alternative care.

This builds on the Government's reforms to enable the care of Aboriginal children subject to a Children's Court protection order to be delegated to an Aboriginal organisation under the *Children Youth and Families Act*.

Victoria's child protection strategy for Aboriginal children and young people is guided by Wungurilwil Gagapduir – a landmark partnership with Aboriginal communities and the child and families sector based on the principle of self-determination.

An unprecedented \$2.2 billion has been invested in transforming the children and families system over the last two Victorian Budgets, including \$31.5 million in the 2021/22 Budget to support Aboriginal organisations to case manage Aboriginal children in care and provide culturally safe and responsive reunification support services.

The Government has committed to reducing the over-representation of Aboriginal children in the care system by 45 per cent by 2031 as signatories of the Closing the Gap National Agreement, and has invested \$160 million since 2018 to reduce the number of Aboriginal children in child protection and out-of-home care.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Child Protection Luke Donnellan

*"This will help keep more children safe while remaining connected to culture and Country."*

*"We are placing more Aboriginal children with Aboriginal carers and authorised Aboriginal organisations – because Aboriginal people are best placed to understand the needs of Aboriginal children and their families."*

*"We will continue working with our partners through the Aboriginal Children's Forum to pursue our Closing the Gap National Agreement targets to reduce the over-representation of Aboriginal children in care."*

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