

Media Release

The Hon Jenny Mikakos MLC
Minister for Families and Children
Minister for Early Childhood Education
Minister for Youth Affairs



Getting Things Done.
Making Things Fair.

Wednesday, 28 March, 2018

BUILDING CULTURAL SUPPORT FOR ABORIGINAL CHILDREN IN CARE

The Andrews Labor Government is building stronger futures for Aboriginal children in care by further strengthening connections to culture and family.

At today's Aboriginal Children's Forum, Minister for Families and Children Jenny Mikakos announced an additional \$440,000 to ensure continuing connection to family, country and culture for Aboriginal children in care

The *Foster and Kinship Carer Recruitment and Capacity Building initiative* further builds on existing initiatives worth \$5.3 million to assist with capacity building and the recruitment of Aboriginal foster and kinship carers.

Today's funding will be shared amongst 11 Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, to provide support, information and training on cultural appropriateness to carers of Aboriginal children.

As of 1 March 2018, a new model for kinship care for Aboriginal children will be introduced across Victoria with a focus on cultural connection and reunification.

This model includes:

- 36 new kinship workers employed by the department to actively search for a child or young person's family and support them to provide care
- A First Supports program for new placements
- Reunification support for Aboriginal children and young people
- Increased community case management for children and carers.

The new model is part of a package of measures for kinship carers, supported by a \$33.5 million investment and recognises the vital role that kinship carers play in caring for some of Victoria's most vulnerable children.

The Aboriginal Children's Forum is held quarterly by the Victorian Government and Aboriginal community controlled organisations to address issues facing Aboriginal children, young people and their families.

Each forum is co-chaired by Ms Mikakos and a chief executive officer of a local Aboriginal community controlled organisation.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Families and Children Jenny Mikakos

"This injection of funding recognises the need for further cultural support and training for carers to ensure all Aboriginal children in care have access to their community and culture."

"We're progressing self-determination for Aboriginal people and tackling the over-representation of Aboriginal children in out-of-home care."