



MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

Recognising the strength of our children, young people and families

Attributable to a Children's Ground spokesperson

Children's Ground families and young people have been invited to speak to media over the past few days. Due to ongoing sorry business, grief, and cultural sensitivities this has not been possible.

As media and politics discuss solutions and 'how to deal with the Alice Springs situation and young people', we continue to witness to the strength and dignity of so many of our families.

Yesterday, four communities, all affected by grief, quietly and deliberately went about their business to deliver early years learning, health and wellbeing for their children. This is community leadership.

Community leaders are living the solutions, and working tirelessly, with limited support from government, to create outcomes that are continuous and long-term.

Tensions remain in our communities. There have been actions by some that are unacceptable. However, overwhelmingly our families and young people have focussed on supporting those in grief, their cultural obligations and finding a pathway through a terrible time.

Our families have created a place in Children's Ground that promotes safety, respect and a focus on ensuring children and families have a choice, have opportunity, and can build a positive future for our next generations. This is the long-term work. This is the solution. We are creating the jobs in our communities. We are creating educational opportunities in our communities, and we are creating health access in our communities.

We recognise the strength of our children and our young people and this is what we must nurture. Our focus is to prevent more children, young people and families from experiencing preventable trauma and to create sustainable opportunities into the future, while holding our culture, identity and rights.

Policies that just focus on policing, crisis and the status quo will not work. These policies are not forward thinking and whilst there is an abundance of political commentary and analysis on the 'problem with our young people', we strongly believe there must be a re-thinking on enduring policies that disproportionately target First Nations communities.

These factors underpin the recent government policy announcements to attempt to deal with the challenges in Alice Springs, however history demonstrates that this will create long term harm to First Nations children and families. If these policies do not change we will be left addressing years of serious neglect, structural racism and a lack of real investment in our communities, culture and people.

Rather than being re-active and focused on punitive measures, Children's Ground would like to see comprehensive government investment into prevention, learning, health, culture and wellbeing. We seek multi-year funding from the government at a scale that will allow for First Nations-led, community driven solutions. We have presented an approach that we know works to the Northern Territory Government for over ten years, but we are still waiting to see genuine government engagement.

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Contact

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About Children's Ground

Children's Ground is designed and led by First Nations communities who are creating a different future for the next generation of children.

Every child born today should experience a lifetime of opportunity and grow up strong in their identity and culture, free from injustice and economic poverty.

If all children can experience this basic right, then whole communities will be happy, healthy and safe places.

Learn more: childrensground.org.au