



MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

Children's Ground statement on the Mparntwe curfew

This week we should be celebrating NAIDOC and the strength of our people.

Instead, we are fighting for our lives.

Children's Ground condemns the response from the Territory and Federal government to the complex social issues in Mparntwe (Alice Springs).

Today's 72-hour lockdown, enforced to counter 'public disorder', is yet another reactionary measure that fails our community.

Children's Ground condemns all forms of violence, but on-going oppressive use of power aimed at a whole community is not the answer.

Both levels of government have refused to invest in community-led solutions that are working. Both levels of government give lip service to preventative solutions but are unwilling to deal with the deeper issues and the long-term.

Since the first Mparntwe curfew in March 2024, Territory and Federal governments continue to refuse to meaningfully invest in First Nations communities and young people. The fly-in fly-out politics of the past four months have been about nothing but politics. It has not been about our children.

Punitive policies that focus on policing, crisis-management and maintaining the status-quo - these policies, and this approach, do not work.

To say that non-government organisations have to 'step up' is an insult. Children's Ground is forced to use philanthropic funding to deliver employment, early childhood education and access to basic services. Government has refused to provide funding for extended hours and community-based initiatives for young people, despite this evidenced and effective approach being put on the table for the past year. Our community leaders want community violence to stop but they are not being backed by government.

The governments stated commitment to "doing things differently" is not happening. What has changed since the curfew in March? The same old story. Business-as-usual. Status-quo.

Stop making promises that are not honoured.

FIFO politics has left First Nations communities of Mparntwe damaged. It is killing us. It is being executed by both Federal and Territory politicians from both sides.

We want to see a commitment to prevention and long-term solutions. A commitment to community designed and led solutions. A commitment to partnership. Not simply, and yet again, a commitment to more police. This has been the response over and over again. It's not working.

The answers to the issues in Alice Springs, and in remote and regional areas facing the same challenges, is not policing and reactive curfews. It is investment in our people, in our communities and into our young people. It is equity. Government must commit to long term preventative measures in partnership with First Nations communities.

END

Contact

Aengus Cassidy, Senior Communications Coordinator
0408 427 841 | media@childrensground.org.au

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