



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### NSW Government scores poorly in new report

The NSW Government is failing across four out of five measures to support Aboriginal children and families, according to a new report card.

The report is the first of an annual series produced by AbSec (Aboriginal Child, Family and Community Care State Secretariat), the NSW peak body for Aboriginal children and families.

“We’ve identified the five most important outcomes for Aboriginal kids receiving child protection services, and they’re being let down across almost every one,” said Tim Ireland, AbSec CEO.

The report card measures the performance of the Department of Family and Community Services (FACS), using the most recent data made available to the public. Comparing performance between 30 June 2015 and 30 June 2016, it shows:

- A 10% increase in the number of Aboriginal children removed from their families
- An 11% decrease in the number of Aboriginal children returning home after a placement in out-of-home care
- A 7% increase in the number of Aboriginal children reported at risk of significant harm
- A 3% increase in the number of Aboriginal children receiving an intensive support service
- A 1% decrease in the percentage of Aboriginal children removed from their parents, but placed with Aboriginal family or kin.

“We know that things are getting worse for Aboriginal children in the long term, but this report shows that we’ve taken major steps backward in the space of just a year,” Mr Ireland said.

“If the number of Aboriginal kids removed from home is significantly increasing every year, while the number of kids returning home is *decreasing*, what does that say about where our kids will be in another 10 years’ time?

“These numbers suggest that the problem we’re seeing now pales in comparison to what we’ll be faced with in the future – unless the NSW Government makes some serious changes.”

Mr Ireland points to the increase in children receiving intensive support services as an example of positive change.

“It’s great to see around 160 more Aboriginal kids receiving intensive support services, but it’s not enough. We need more investment in early intervention services, and we need these services to be delivered by Aboriginal community organisations. That way, parents will have access to the support they need, and they’ll be confident approaching services they can trust.”

The **2017 report card is available at [absec.org.au](http://absec.org.au)**. AbSec expects to publish its next report card once data for last financial year is released.

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**Tim Ireland is available for interview opportunities.**

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