



MEDIA RELEASE

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New workshops keep Aboriginal kids close to culture

A new series of workshops for child protection and support workers has just launched, aiming to keep Aboriginal children in care connected to their culture.

More than 6,000 Aboriginal children in NSW have been removed from their parents by authorities and placed into out-of-home care. They are more than 10 times more likely to be removed from their families than their non-Indigenous peers.

“With the number of Aboriginal kids in care rising each year, it’s so important that we protect their right to their culture,” said Tim Ireland, CEO of AbSec (Aboriginal Child, Family and Community Care State Secretariat). AbSec is the NSW peak body for Aboriginal children and families.

“It’s bad enough that our kids are being torn away from their parents. The last thing they need is to be torn from their cultural identity and broader community as well.”

AbSec’s Cultural Connections Workshop is a five-hour, face-to-face seminar for child support practitioners working with Aboriginal children. Run by AbSec’s Aboriginal staff, the workshop equips workers with the skills and knowledge to create cultural support plans for Aboriginal children in care. It also focuses on building interpersonal skills to help non-Aboriginal workers consult effectively with Aboriginal families and communities.

“In NSW, all Aboriginal children in care are required to have a complete cultural support plan, outlining how they will remain connected to their culture and community while they’re living out of home.

“Yet many of the workers expected to create these plans have little knowledge of Aboriginal culture themselves, and they feel left in the dark without a frame of reference,” Mr Ireland said.

“Our goal is to support the support workers and create a minimum standard, so they can feel confident in helping Aboriginal kids in their care. At the end of the day it’s all about the kids, and what’s best for them.”

Bookings are now open for Cultural Connections Workshops across NSW at <http://www.absec.org.au/workshop>.

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