



VACCA
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Media Release

VICTORIAN ABORIGINAL CHILD CARE AGENCY

12 February 2021

VACCA and Link-Up host the 13th Anniversary of the National Apology to the Stolen Generation by the Australian Government

Each year on the 13 February we commemorate the day the Australian Government said sorry in Parliament, acknowledging the pain and suffering caused by Governments to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by the forced removal of their children from family, community, culture and country.

13 years on, while the Apology represents a significant step in the truth-telling process, we are still bringing our people home.

VACCA and Link-Up Victoria, in partnership with Connecting Home and Darebin City Council, are hosting a free online event to commemorate the Anniversary of the National Apology on Saturday 13 February.

The event gives all Australians the opportunity to pay their respects to all Stolen Generations, both the living and those who have passed on to the Dreaming. It provides a voice for the Stolen Generations and tells them that they have not been forgotten.

VACCA CEO Muriel Bamblett says it's an important day in history that should be nationally commemorated like other historical days in this country.

"When the apology was made 13 years ago, it finally recognised the destruction caused to our peoples and cultures by successive Australian governments. It was vindication for all Stolen Generations, both living and passed, for the hurt and damage caused to them and their families for no fault of their own. It provided affirmation of Australia's legacy of systemic racism and it was a huge step in truth telling about the history of Australia," Ms Bamblett says.

"We need to see Stolen Generations markers in all major cities and rural towns, the Anniversary of the Apology should be commemorated by all levels of Government and government departments, local Councils, secondary schools and universities. A lot has changed in the last 13 years to ensure that the Apology was not a token gesture, but a lot more needs to be done."

Through commemorative events, development of educational resources about the Stolen Generations, and placement of markers in cities across Victoria we can continue to encourage conversations about the nation's true history and acknowledge the trauma faced by those who continue to feel the impacts of being removed from family, culture and Country.

- ENDS -

For more information and media enquiries

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EVENT INFORMATION

National Apology to the Stolen Generations

Saturday 13 February, 2021

- The event will be streamed www.vacca.org and our Facebook page starting from 10.30am.
- The event will include a live cross to the Stolen Generations marker at Preston for a Traditional Owner Welcome to Country and Smoking ceremony. This will be followed by a Laying of the Wreath ceremony by Stolen Generations survivors.
- Guests include Muriel Bamblett, CEO Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA), Ian Hamm, Chair, Connecting Home, and City of Darebin Mayor Cr Lina Messina, and featuring music from Kutcha Edwards and Uncle Murray Harrison.

ABOUT LINK-UP

Link-Up Victoria provides support to the Stolen Generations, helping them to find and reunite with family, reconnect to culture, proudly walk their Country and reclaim their Aboriginal identity.

Link-Up is the only service in Victoria to provide reunions for the Stolen Generations. These reunions help create connections to family, culture and Country to encourage healing and gives survivors a sense of who they are and where they belong.

To access Link-Up Victoria's services, visit www.linkupvictoria.org.au or call 1800 OUR MOB (687 662)

ABOUT VACCA

The Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA) is Victoria's leading Aboriginal child and family services organisation and the largest provider of family violence services. We have been supporting children, young people, and families within the community for over 40 years as an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO).

Our purpose is supporting culturally strong, safe and thriving Aboriginal communities. We believe in the principle of the right of Aboriginal people to self-determination and the rights of the child as well as a strong commitment to upholding Victoria Aboriginal cultural protocols. Our values are; *Best Interests of the Child, Aboriginal Cultural Observance, Respect, Self-determination, Healing and Empowerment and Excellence.*

We deliver over 70 programs across Victoria including child and family services, family violence, support for stolen generations, child protection, cultural strengthening programs, mental health, financial services, justice and redress support, early years and homelessness services.