Centre for Excellence
in Child and Family Welfare Inc.

Media Release

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CCYP Aboriginal Inclusion Action Plan a welcome start

Centre for Excellence in Child & Family Welfare CEO Deb Tsorbaris today welcomed the release of the *Aboriginal Inclusion Action Plan* by Victoria's Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People Andrew Jackomos.

Launched at the Koorie Heritage Trust, the *Aboriginal Inclusion Action Plan* describes how the Commission for Children and Young People will work to ensure that Aboriginal children, young people and communities are engaged inclusively in their work. Clear goals, milestones and targets are included in the plan.

"I commend the approach taken by the Commission in this publication. It provides a great example for all organisations working with Aboriginal children and families", said Ms Tsorbaris.

"With recent Productivity Commission data showing that the number of Victorian Aboriginal Children in out of home care rose by 42 per cent in 2013-14 and by 15 per cent in 2014-15, it's so important that all community service organisations address how their services and staff work with vulnerable Aboriginal children and families."

A strong commitment is also required from Government to address the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child welfare system.

Government and community service organisations need to focus on keeping kids at home and out of the child welfare system by making sure families are getting support to stay strong and meets the needs of their children. Government also needs to be supporting agencies to provide culturally appropriate care.

The Andrews Government can do this by:

- Committing to the development of well designed, evidence-informed early intervention services for Aboriginal children and families
- Fully funding services to meet their new cultural planning obligations
- Adequately resourcing Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) to ensure Aboriginal children can stay connected to their culture, family and community when they are in care and recognise ACCOs are the legitimate agencies to identify and respond to needs within their communities.

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