

Media Statement

VACYP unveils election priorities for Aboriginal children, young people and families

13 October 2026

This week the Victorian Aboriginal Children & Young People's Alliance (VACYP) released its election priorities ahead of the 2026 Victorian State Election, calling on all political parties and candidates to commit to a stronger future for Aboriginal children, young people and families.

Representing 15 Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) across Victoria, VACYP's election priorities focus on protecting the progress Aboriginal communities have fought hard to achieve, strengthening Aboriginal community control and advancing Aboriginal self-determination by ensuring governments continue investing in what works for Aboriginal children, young people and families.

The priorities call on all political parties and candidates to:

1. Secure the future of Aboriginal child and family services by continuing \$72 million in lapsing funding for ACCOs beyond June 2027.
2. Invest in Aboriginal-led solutions and strengthen Aboriginal community control.
3. Keep Aboriginal families strong through early intervention and prevention.
4. Build a strong and sustainable ACCO sector.
5. Legislate the Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People.
6. Honour commitments already made to Aboriginal communities, including Treaty, the recommendations of the Yoorrook Justice Commission and Wungurilwil Gapgapduir: Aboriginal Children and Families Agreement.

VACYP CEO Jason Kanoa said the election presents a critical opportunity to reaffirm Aboriginal self-determination as a guiding principle for government policy and decision-making.

"We've seen what is possible when Aboriginal communities are trusted and resourced to lead. The progress we've made in recent years has been driven by greater Aboriginal community control and a commitment to ensuring Aboriginal people have a genuine say in the decisions that affect their lives," Mr Kanoa said.

"As we approach the State Election, we are calling on all political parties to reaffirm Aboriginal self-determination as a fundamental principle of government policy, ensuring Aboriginal people have a genuine say in the decisions that shape their communities and futures.

"We cannot afford to lose or dilute that commitment. It must remain a bipartisan priority and continue to guide the policies, services and decisions that impact Aboriginal children, young people and families."

A key focus of the campaign is ensuring the continuation of \$72 million in lapsing Victorian Government funding for ACCO-led child and family services, which is due to expire on 30 June 2027. The funding supports critical Aboriginal-led programs and services across Victoria, including family services, family preservation and Aboriginal Children in Aboriginal Care (ACAC).

The risk isn't that we don't know what works. The risk is that we fail to sustain it," Mr Kanoa said.

"Without long-term certainty, ACCOs will be forced to make difficult decisions about staffing and service delivery. The people most affected by that uncertainty won't be organisations, they'll be the children, young people and families who rely on these services every day."

VACYP is encouraging all political parties and candidates to commit to the six priorities ahead of the Victorian State Election on 28 November.

To learn more about VACYP's 2026 Election Priorities, visit the campaign webpage: www.vacypalliance.org/election-2026.

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