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State funds for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child safety in Ipswich

Child protection services for Indigenous families in Ipswich have received increased support following an announcement by the Member for Ipswich Rachel Nolan that will assist Aboriginal and Islander child protection agencies implement critical reforms within their communities.

Ms Nolan today announced the Kambu Medical Centre had received \$150,708 in funding in 2004-05 as part of a \$1.7 funding initiative to help agencies to work collaboratively with the Department of Child Safety in reforming child protection practices in Indigenous communities.

He said that the child protection agency would provide advice to the department on a range of local child protection issues and inform implementation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Child Placement Principle, participate in initial assessments and provide information and support to Indigenous families.

Ms Nolan said 10 agencies throughout Queensland would share in \$1,787,375 in funding over a six month period, which included a \$25,000 one-off funding allocation to build each agency's capacity and a further \$21,000 to support organisational costs.

"This latest funding announcement is a step forward in terms of addressing the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in the statutory child protection system," Ms Nolan said.

"To ensure Indigenous families and children get the care and support they need, we are funding services that will directly improve the placement options for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.

"The funding will significantly build upon the capacity of the agencies to respond to the needs of Indigenous children, young people and their families in contact with the child protection system," she said.

Minister for Child Safety Mike Reynolds said that the work of the agencies in local communities was invaluable in ensuring that all children and young people lived in safe environments and were able to achieve their full potential.

Mr Reynolds said the funding formed part of the Department of Child Safety's commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child protection agencies, with additional funding of \$4.6 million in 2004-05 increasing to \$12.43 million in 2006-07.

“The Crime and Misconduct Commission inquiry specifically recommended that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child protection agencies be provided with the necessary support and resources to provide culturally appropriate child protection services,” Mr Reynolds said.

Mr Reynolds said the Department of Child Safety had also established the Indigenous Support and Development Unit based in Cairns to specifically support and develop Indigenous child protection agencies in Queensland.