

CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE FAMILIES  
our concern | our responsibility | our future



**childaware**  
CONFERENCE  
AN INITIATIVE OF  
FamiliesAustralia

16-17 May 2019

BRISBANE  
Convention and  
Exhibition Centre

## PLENARY KEYNOTE

### **Title: Early intervention and prevention for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their mothers**

Across this nation, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are 10 times more likely than non-Aboriginal children to be taken from their families by child protection authorities. Family violence (predominantly men's violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women) is the primary driver of the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. The realistic and ongoing fear of children being taken is a key barrier to our women disclosing experiences of violence and seeking support. Addressing the crisis of increasing removals of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children demands greater access to early intervention and prevention to address the violence experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. With greater culturally safe, specialised and wraparound support for our mothers to live free from violence, our children would be safe in their care instead of lost in the system - at risk of losing their cultural connections.

By sharing the stories of the women and children Djirra works with every day, the audience will gain a deeper understanding of the ongoing impacts of colonisation, intergenerational trauma and contemporary policy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children and the real life impacts of discriminatory practices and victim-blaming attitudes within child protection systems. The audience will also learn about evidence-based solutions to the interlocking issues of family violence and child removals through best-practice examples of Djirra's culturally safe and trauma informed frontline support and innovative early intervention and prevention programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children.