

For immediate release

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MEDIA RELEASE

NAPCAN urges the Northern Territory Government to increase investment in prevention of child abuse

The National Association for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN) notes the concerns raised in the Northern Territory Coroner's report issued yesterday which highlighted problems in the Northern Territory child protection system.

NAPCAN urges the Northern Territory government to make a significant investment in community-based family support services in order to address child abuse and neglect before it occurs.

Olya Booyar, NAPCAN President, said, 'The priority must be on primary prevention and early intervention activities. The report shows that the Northern Territory Government is struggling to deal with the issue of child abuse and neglect. It would be better to tackle the problem before it occurs, by investing in community-based early childhood programs to ensure that families get help early.

'The fact is, prevention measures involve large scale investment in services such as postnatal home visits for a baby's first two years of life, providing at-home information and support to parents regarding infants' needs as well as preschool for all four year olds.

'The death of the two children in the Northern Territory is a tragedy but if it results in improvements in the way the Northern Territory government responds to the problem of child abuse by creating stronger and safer communities for children, then some good can come out of the situation.'

Ends

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Notes to the editor:

NAPCAN (National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect) is Australia's leading advocate for the prevention of child abuse and neglect. NAPCAN's goal is to bring about the changes necessary in individual and community behavior and in government policy to stop abuse and neglect before it starts.

NAPCAN also works directly with children and young people conducting innovative programs to strengthen protective behaviors, build resilience and life skills. NAPCAN also assists 'at risk' parents through face-to-face programs and works in local communities building inclusive networks and strengthening local support of children and families.

A charity, NAPCAN is governed by a national board with the support of professional sub-committees and state and territory councils. For further information go to: www.napcan.org.au