

GETTING THINGS DONE

Victorian Budget 18/19



The Hon Jenny Mikakos MP

Minister for Families and Children

Tuesday, 1 May, 2018

Keeping kids safe from harm

Victorian children at risk of abuse or neglect will be better protected and supported thanks a massive investment in child and family services.

The Andrews Labor Government will invest an unprecedented \$858.6 million in the *Victorian Budget 2018/19* to continue the transformation of Victoria's children and family services system through Roadmap for Reform, moving it from crisis response to prevention and early intervention.

The Budget includes \$225.5 million to employ more than 450 child protection workers – the largest ever expansion of the workforce, growing it by 36.4 per cent since November 2014 – and to support our after-hours response.

There is a continued focus on placing children who need to go into out-of-home care with a loving family, with \$390.7 million for more home-based care placements and better support for carers – including a new kinship care model and Australian-first reforms such as professionalised foster care.

Additional targeted care packages to transition children out of residential care and programs to keep siblings together and help young people leaving care are also funded, along with an expansion of the LOOKOUT out-of-home care education support program to include kinders for the first time.

Parents – especially those with young kids – will get the extra help they need much earlier with a \$101.7 million investment in family services and other early intervention programs, including *CHILDFirst*, *Cradle to Kinder* and *Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies*.

New evidence-based programs working intensively with families will also be funded.

A total \$47.3 million will go towards supporting Aboriginal families and children including cultural planning and the Australian-first Aboriginal Children in Aboriginal Care program, which enables Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations to take on legal guardianship of Aboriginal children in care.

A \$49.9 million boost will fund more therapeutic counselling for victim survivors of family violence and provide women and children more flexible support packages for relocation costs, furniture, clothing or security measures.

Victim survivors of sexual assault will also get more access to counselling support and more adolescent family violence programs will be established.

Recently passed Child Information Sharing legislation is supported by \$43.4 million across government to ensure staff can be trained in how best to promote the safety and wellbeing of children.

Hundreds of neighbourhood houses across the state are also set to benefit from an unprecedented \$21.8 million investment by the Labor Government to provide more services to more families, delivering an extra 76,700 hours each year so that houses can not only provide more services and activities, but better tailor them to suit the needs of their local community.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Families and Children Jenny Mikakos

“Protecting our kids shouldn't just be a priority when they need a crisis response – that's why we're making an unprecedented investment in prevention and early intervention.”

“We will make sure Victorian families and children receive the help they need much earlier, so kids can lead safe and happy lives.”

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“This Budget invests almost eight times what the former Liberal Government spent on Neighbourhood Houses during their entire term.”