



ACT Government
2004-2005 BUDGET

MEDIA RELEASE

PROTECTION AND SUPPORT FOR CANBERRA CHILDREN

The Stanhope Government has increased funding to protect and support Canberra's children and their families by more than \$39 million over four years, bringing the total funding over this period to around \$110 million.

"The raising of children is one of the most important roles of our community. The government is dedicated to supporting Canberra families through early intervention, child abuse prevention and increased support for foster carers, said Ms Katy Gallagher MLA, Minister for Education, Youth and Family Services.

Supporting Children at Risk

An allocation of \$37.2 million over four years will expand the support and protection provided to children at risk. The additional funding will enable an immediate and appropriate response to dramatically increased demand for intervention and support services in child protection. It will address increased demand for substitute care and employ additional staff to enable appropriate levels of intervention and support services to be maintained.

"Our role is to protect children and young people from abuse and neglect and to ensure that services for the care and protection of children and young people foster their health, education and developmental needs," said Ms Gallagher.

Increased Payments to Foster Carers

"The Government recognises the invaluable work that foster carers do in our community. An increase of \$1.5 million over four years in subsidy will provide additional support for our carers"

Indigenous Foster Care

An allocation of \$453,000 over four years will be used to establish a viable Indigenous Foster Care Service and to improve outcomes for Indigenous children in foster care. The initiative will assist and support Indigenous families with the aim of preventing the problems that result in contact with the welfare system. It will also support children who are already in the welfare system to maintain their cultural identity and links.

"Children at risk and their families are some of the most vulnerable people in our community. This funding increase will provide support and protection for our children," said Ms Gallagher.

Statement Ends.