



ACT Government  
**2004-2005 BUDGET**

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**MEDIA RELEASE**

**CONTINUED FUNDING FOR MESSENGER YOUTH PROGRAM**

The Messenger's Program, an arts based program that aims to promote and build young people's resilience against difficult times, has been allocated \$474,000 over four years in the 2004-2005 Budget.

"This funding is a reflection of the Government's commitment, as stated in the Canberra Plan, to invest in our young people and ensure they are given every opportunity to realise their potential," said Ms Katy Gallagher, Minister for Education, Youth and Family Services.

The Messenger's Program provides young people who are displaying signs of depression and anxiety with arts based projects that foster resilience. The Program also facilitates transition from the school counseling system to community-based support. Support and intervention is effective and appropriate for the individual.

The Messengers Program has operated for four years out of the Tuggeranong Community Arts Association and works in partnership with ACT schools and the community.

"The Messengers Program aims to improve the health and well-being of young people, while protecting and supporting those in need. It fosters creativity and innovation and helps young people to increase their skills and confidence. This funding will ensure the continuation of a successful and award winning pilot initiative."

"Reports from young people who have accessed the Messengers Program identify the program as effective in reducing levels of anxiety, anger, feeling of self-harm and feelings of being overwhelmed. Many young people have also reported improvements in communication with their family members."

"The Messenger's Program has achieved very positive results and is a valuable investment in our young people," concluded Ms Gallagher.

**Statement Ends.**