



# BUDGET 2009-2010 INVESTING IN OUR COMMUNITY

## MEDIA RELEASE

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## **Children and Youth: Early intervention for a better future**

\$11 million over four years is provided in the 2009-10 ACT Budget to support young Canberrans in need.

Minister for Children and Young People, Andrew Barr, said the funding allocation reflects ACT Labor's policy of investing earlier in children and young people who are unable to live at home and many of whom have experienced significant trauma and abuse.

"Research tells us that the sooner stable and supported care arrangements can be established, the better the long-term outcomes for children - be it in education, physical health, or emotional and social development," Mr Barr said.

"Based on this, the Government is making targeted investments in the lives of Canberra's vulnerable children and young people.

"Young people who suffer neglect and abuse can end up in long-term intensive supportive care placements, costing upwards of \$300,000 per year," Mr Barr said.

"The investments we are making through this Budget will help identify and assist young people who need to be supported in a safe, community and family setting, as well as help many to avoid ending up in costly residential settings that do not meet their needs."

For many reasons, including increased community awareness, the number of children requiring care and protection, foster or kinship care and high support care has almost doubled over the past decade. Children coming into the system are also presenting with more complex needs which require intensive levels of support and care from skilled carers.

"The 2009-10 ACT Budget continues the Government's commitment to deliver early intervention for vulnerable children and young people, and support those who provide care for children and young people in stable and safe family and community settings," Mr Barr said.

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