



ACT Government
2004-2005 BUDGET

MEDIA RELEASE

\$3.3 MILLION FOR INDIGENOUS CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

The Stanhope Government has allocated an additional \$3.3 million dollars over four years to support Indigenous children and families in the ACT, said Minister for Education, Youth and Family Services, Ms Katy Gallagher MLA.

“The government is committed to investing in the people of Canberra and building a stronger community for everyone.”

“This funding will strengthen the Indigenous community in the long term by improving educational outcomes for children and young people, and providing support to families and to children in care,” said Ms Gallagher.

Indigenous Student Support

More than \$1.6 million has been committed over four years to support learning and retention for Indigenous students in government schools, with a particular focus on improving literacy and numeracy.

Indigenous Early Childhood Support

Improvements in literacy and numeracy will also be addressed through \$868,000 over four years for Indigenous Early Childhood Support. This initiative will support Indigenous children from birth to 6 years of age through increased opportunities for participation in early childhood education at Koori Preschools. This will enhance the social, emotional, literacy and numeracy development of Indigenous children. Indigenous families will have greater choice and flexibility in early childhood education with an increase in the provision of Koori preschool programs.

“Research shows that achievement in the early years of schooling has a major impact on retention and attainment in later years,” said Ms Gallagher.

“Improving educational outcomes in these vital early years will have an impact on employment and disadvantage in the long term.”

The budget also provides an additional \$312,000 over four years for Jumby Mulla, an Indigenous-managed family support service in the north of Canberra, administered through Billabong Aboriginal Corporation.

“Funding of Indigenous organisations is an important component in ensuring the services delivered to the Indigenous community are relevant and appropriate,” said Ms Gallagher.

Indigenous Foster Care

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

“The ACT Government is committed to improving the social and educational outcomes of Indigenous Canberrans.”

“We want to give everyone the chance to develop to their potential and to participate fully in our community,” Ms Gallagher said.

Statement Ends.