

STATE BUDGET

2023-24

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BUDGET DELIVERS \$216.6 MILLION BOOST TO SUPPORT CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

The 2023-24 State Budget provides a \$216.6 million boost for the state's child protection system, funding measures to meet the costs of children in care as well as a comprehensive suite of new measures to support the system.

The budget allocates an additional \$109.5 million over five years reflecting the number of children and young people in non-family-based care.

The budget also provides \$107.1 million for a suite of new measures to support the system, including important investments in early intervention to reduce demand on the child protection system, better support for families, additional support for foster and kinship carers and responding to recent child protection reviews.

This includes \$35.7 million over five years to boost targeted intensive family support services for vulnerable families prioritising those living in the northern metropolitan region to support families with children at risk of entering the child protection system.

Also included is \$32.1 million over four years to increase carer payments from 1 July 2023, including an extra \$50 per fortnight for general foster and kinship carers for each child or young person in their care under the age of 16 years plus a 4.8 per cent boost to all carer payments to assist with growing cost of living pressures.

Family-based care is the preferred placement option for children and young people in care. The increase in carer payments will assist carers with the day-to-day costs of caring for a child or young person.

Increases to carer payments to better reflect the true cost of caring was a recommendation in Dr Fiona Arney's *Report of the Independent Inquiry into Foster and Kinship Care*, released late last year.

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Other measures include:

- \$6.1 million over four years for the Stronger Start program, helping at risk first time parents at the earliest opportunity;
- \$4 million for an additional seven full-time equivalent staff to undertake additional kinship care assessments. This will help to ensure kinship placements are explored for children and young people to support them in keeping strong connections with family, community and culture;
- \$2.1 million over four years to increase the capacity for family reunification services to safely reunite children and young people with their family after a period in care;
- \$1.9 million over three years to support the work to comply with the requirements of the National Redress Scheme;
- \$1.3 million over five years to establish the across government child death review model; and
- \$5.2 million over two years for new office accommodation in metropolitan Adelaide to meet staffing and community needs.

As previously announced the budget also provides:

- \$13.4 million over five years to increase family group conferencing services; and
- \$3.2 million over five years to establish a peak body for Aboriginal children and young people.

Quotes attributable to Stephen Mullighan

Child protection is a top priority for the Malinauskas Government which is making a significant investment to support children, young people and their families.

We recognise the incredible efforts undertaken by family-based carers, and the costs associated with caring for children and young people who have experienced trauma and abuse.

Quotes attributable to Katrine Hildyard

Carers are crucial to the child protection and family support system; they help keep children and young people safe and give them a home environment that nurtures and supports them to thrive and move into adulthood with confidence.

Through numerous roundtables, forums and other conversations with carers across the state, I have heard of their generosity, commitment and needs. I am proud that our government is listening and acting on carers' calls for increased support.

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We know carers may be experiencing financial hardship with cost of living issues. We hope these additional payments help relieve stress and better support carers in their incredibly important role. Through this and other commitments, we will continue to support carers and work to attract more people to this crucial role.

Our extensive child protection and family support measures have children at the centre and a focus on supporting and strengthening families and carers to provide the best chance for children to grow up safe and strong in community and culture.

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