

STATE BUDGET

2019-20

MINISTER FOR HUMAN SERVICES HON MICHELLE LENSINK MLC MEDIA RELEASE

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Intensive family support program trial

The Marshall Liberal Government will provide \$3 million in the 2019-20 State Budget to trial an intensive family support program specifically developed for South Australian families at risk of having their children enter the child protection system.

The program's aim is to ensure children remain safe from abuse and neglect and keep families together, if safe to do so.

The program will be delivered by AnglicareSA and is specifically designed to assist vulnerable families in northern Adelaide, an area of greatest need as determined by State Government funded research.

The trial will target families with known risk factors, particularly families experiencing multiple complex issues, which may include families with histories of domestic violence, mental health concerns and drug and alcohol abuse.

Families will receive intensive support from specialist support staff for up to eight months, including support to improve the safety and stabilisation of the family unit, family functioning and parenting skills.

Minister for Human Services Michelle Lensink said the Government was determined to do more to prevent child abuse and neglect in South Australia, which included a focus on better supporting families in need of intensive service interventions.

"This trial is about ensuring vulnerable families have the right supports in place to manage complex issues, with the aim of avoiding children entering the child protection system," said Minister Lensink.

"We want to give parents the best possible chance to look after their kids safely at home and this program gives them support when they need it.

"Getting into the family home before crisis point and helping South Australian mums and dads should help to keep family units together and we know that keeping children in a safe, family environment is the best solution."

Minister Lensink said working with families where children are at risk of experiencing neglect or abuse was a high priority.

"The State Government is currently consolidating services and staff from several departments to establish a new system of intensive support services, designed to disrupt patterns of child abuse and neglect," said Minister Lensink.

A new unit is being set up within the Department for Human Services to deliver and commission child and family services with the long-term goal of reducing the need for children to enter out-of-home care.