



**Centre for Excellence  
in Child and Family Welfare Inc.**

## **Media release**

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### **State Budget a first step, but change must be sustained**

The Victorian Coalition Government's first State Budget includes some welcome announcements for community services, but the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare says key issues remain to be resolved if the sector, and ultimately outcomes for children and young people, are to benefit from sustainable, positive change.

"The Centre welcomes the Independent Children and Young Persons' Commissioner, funding for ante- and post-natal support, measures to strengthen out-of-home care, and support for those transitioning from the care system to independent living," Dr Buoy said.

"It's good to see the Government did not wait to complete its child protection inquiry before making new investments. However, there is still too great an emphasis on 'intensive care' child protection measures, and too few resources for early intervention and prevention through ChildFirst and Family Services.

"These vital areas are already pressured with increasing demand and complexity. The cases they deal with are the very ones that without more funding will worsen to the point where they further overload our child protection responses," Dr Buoy said.

Dr Buoy also noted continuing concerns about the under-funding of the community sector pay case, and the potential impact of the Government's four-year savings targets on service delivery for vulnerable children, young people and families.

"We need to ensure that we continue to invest in a sector where there is little scope for savings and efficiencies," Dr Buoy said.

She said the Budget documents also failed to offer the kind of transparency needed to achieve a full understanding of funding for community services, and to make clear comparisons between past and new funding commitments.

"We really need a clearer baseline if we are to build on this Budget through the recommendations of the Protecting Victoria's Vulnerable Children Inquiry," Dr Buoy concluded.

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