

What does the Victorian State Budget 2024-2025 include for children and families?

Measures relevant to the child and family services sector

The Victorian State Budget 2024-25 was handed down on Tuesday the 7th of May, 2024. The Centre has prepared this quick overview of the budget measures that are relevant to your work in the child and family services sector, and to the children, young people and families that you support.

The Centre welcomes the Allan Government's first Budget which focuses on helping families, and providing support to the children and young people that need it most.

Supporting families

Supporting children and young people at school

- This Victorian Budget delivers the **School Saving Bonus** as part of a \$287 million package – providing \$400 in support for every child at government schools, and eligible concession card holders at non-government schools. Delivered through schools, the boost will help up to 700,000 students with uniforms, camps, excursions and sporting events at school – to make sure no child misses out on school activities due to financial stress. For families with more than one school-aged child, they will receive the bonus per child, so a family with three children will receive \$1200 in support for school related expenses. This will provide much needed relief, particularly for families experiencing economic hardship, and will be available from Term 1 2025
- \$6.8 million for The **Glasses for Kids program** which will support free eye tests and glasses for public school students
- \$200 **Get Active** vouchers for eligible Victorian children to participate in community sport
- \$139 million to get **more teachers** into Victorian schools to provide high quality education for all children

- \$6.3 million will support the **Primary School Nursing Program**, which provides free support and care for families of children in primary school
- \$16 million to **provide specialist teacher training** to better support children displaying challenging behaviours
- \$39 million to continue the landmark **Respectful Relationships** program to be run in schools and early education and care settings
- \$22 million for **student support services** – teams of psychologists, speech pathologists and social workers who provide integrated care for children that need additional supports at school
- \$14 million to offer mental healthcare in schools to be delivered by headspace
- \$16 million in our **community language schools** for CALD students
- \$3.9 million will help meet demand for **interpreting and translating services** in schools and early childhood facilities

Child and family services and out of home care

Children in care

\$374 million has been invested to protect children and support their families, including:

- \$198 million in early intervention and family reunification to keep families together and children safe, through the **Strong Families, Safe Children** initiative
- \$128 million to support the **child protection workforce** to keep children safe and help those families who are most in need
- \$38 million to **support carers** providing home-based care for children and young people
- \$8.4 million to better support students at risk, funding new **LOOKOUT** learning advisors to provide wrap-around care for young people. The LOOKOUT program works with carers, schools and kinders to help ensure children at risk remain connected to their education
- Funding continues the **Family Preservation and Reunification Response Program**

- Funding continues for the **Outcomes, Practice and Evidence Network**
- Funding continues for innovative service models such as Putting Families First, family group conferencing and Early Help family services

Early Years

- \$129 million to continue delivering **Free Kinder** and the statewide rollout of Three-Year-Old Kinder
- A further \$19 million will provide new **Building Blocks grants** – enabling more kindergartens to refurbish and renovate
- \$29 million to support more families through those vital early years with the **Universal, Enhanced and Aboriginal Maternal Child Health programs**
- \$5.7 million to **support mums in rural and regional areas**, ensuring they have the care they need during pregnancy
- \$4 million to continue paediatric services through the **Victorian Aboriginal Health Service**, ensuring that Aboriginal children continue to be provided with culturally appropriate care

Family violence

*\$211 million to help keep **women and children safe from family violence**, and provide intervention and assistance to victim-survivors, including:*

- \$42 million for **perpetrator case management**, helping to keep perpetrators in view and keep victims safe, as well as creating specialised programs for diverse cohorts, including Aboriginal Victorians
- \$30 million to **support refuges and emergency accommodation** for families escaping violence
- \$24 million in the **Central Information Point** to help frontline family violence practitioners work together and share information to keep women and children safe

- \$9.2 million toward the growth and capacity of the **family violence workforce** in assessing and managing family violence risk and wellbeing issues for children and young people
- \$38 million for specialist support, including case management and support packages for **victim survivors on temporary visas**
- Additional \$38 million will **deliver specialist support**, including case management for women and children
- \$6.8 million will provide **financial counselling** services to support victim-survivors in their recovery from financial abuse and family violence
- \$9.2 million to **strengthen and upskill the workforce**, including staff at Sexual Assault Services Victoria and training for workforces who interact with victim-survivors
- \$16 million to support **Aboriginal women and families experiencing family violence**, and culturally appropriate youth justice diversion and family violence support to reduce First Nations peoples' interactions with the justice system

Justice

- \$112 million to support the work of our **alcohol and drug courts** in their use of intensive, individualised and evidence-based treatment programs to address the underlying issues that cause or contribute to offending
- \$34 million to trial **electronic monitoring** of serious, high-risk young offenders on bail
- \$28 million for a suite of initiatives to support young people at risk of entering the justice system with education
- \$6.6 million to expand the **Youth Crime Prevention and Early Intervention Project** to more suburbs – a project run by Victoria Police in Brimbank and Wyndham that is helping young people at risk of offending

Housing and homelessness

- \$8 million **Rental stress support package** supporting Victorians experiencing renting stress, investing in community organisations who provide financial counselling, advocacy and legal assistance and support to renters
- \$700 million to extend the government's **Victorian Homebuyer Fund**, enabling the government to assist homebuyers in the purchase of their homes
- \$45 million to expand the Sacred Heart Mission's Journey to Social Inclusion program **to end chronic homelessness**. This program will provide long-term, stable accommodation, as well as three years of intensive wrap around support

Cost of living

- \$2 million to help make sure **food relief organisations** can continue responding to local needs and \$1.5 million to support food hubs across regional Victoria in Albury–Wodonga, Bendigo, Geelong, Mildura, Shepparton and Warrnambool
- \$1.1 million will provide **food relief to support tenants living in high-rise social housing**

Healthcare

- \$36 million to establish a **Community Health Hub** in the City of Melbourne to address alcohol and drug-related harm
- \$18 million to support 12 **women's health organisations** to provide preventative health services and community outreach
- \$11 million to improve young Aboriginal Victorians' physical and mental health by reconnecting to their culture through the **Culture and Kinship program**

- \$4.4 million to **provide medical care to refugees and asylum seekers** who are not eligible for Medicare or other support programs
- \$2.1 million to deliver access to **trans and gender diverse health services** and operate two multidisciplinary gender-affirming care clinics in Ballarat and Preston – supporting LGBTIQ+ Victorians
- \$10 million for better **mental health and alcohol and other drugs facilities** across Victoria, responding to recommendations from the Royal Commission into Victoria’s Mental Health System
- \$26 million to continue the delivery of statewide community mental health programs and reforms, suicide prevention initiatives, telehealth, and provide community-based support through **Mental Health and Wellbeing Hubs**
- \$21 million to open another 20 **Youth Prevention and Recovery Care (YPARC)** beds, and continue operations of the Mental Health Tribunal and psychiatry services, providing treatment, care and support

Redress

- \$165 million to deliver **redress for** Victorians who experienced abuse and neglect as children in institutional care prior to 1990

For further details about the Victorian Budget 2024-25, visit www.budget.vic.gov.au

View the Centre’s Budget Media Statement [here](#).