



State Budget 2007/08 Information Sheet Children and Young People

In March 2007 the Carpenter Government announced a number of funding initiatives for children and young people following the Ford Review. These initiatives include the investment of \$100 million over four years to implement the review's recommendations which included that the Department for Community Development be disbanded and two new Departments be established; Department for Child Protection and the new Department for Communities. The two new departments will become operational on 1st July 2007.

The centrepiece of the Government's 07/08 budget in relation to children and young people is the new funding of \$31.1 million (an increase of 12.9%) to the Department for Child Protection, which will raise operating expenditure to \$241 million. In contrast, only \$31.1 million is allocated to the new Department for Communities.

The Department for Child Protection funding includes a boost of \$32.35 million over four years for foster carers. The initiative will provide a much needed increase of up to \$100 per fortnight to the foster carer allowance.

| WACOSS' Recommendation | Budget Outcome | Comments |
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| Fund a strategic "whole of community" approach to children's and young people's wellbeing, which is based on the 2004 Caring Well Protecting Well Report ¹ . An implementation framework, based on this important work, should be developed in partnership with industry and the community sector. | No specific budget allocation. | <p>With a record budget surplus, the Government had the opportunity to fund a comprehensive "whole of community" approach to children and family wellbeing. The new Department for Communities should have been resourced to undertake this important work.</p> <p>The 2007/08 budget reflects a low budget priority to community development services, which are essential to children's and young people's wellbeing. This is shown by the contrast between the \$241 million operational budget of the Department for Child Protection, and the \$31.1 million operational budget of the Department for Communities.</p> |

¹ Harries, M., Harris, T., Diamond, S. and Mackenzie, G. (2004) *Caring Well – Protecting Well: Investing in systemic responses to protect children in WA*, The Ministerial Advisory Council on Child Protection Western Australia, Perth

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| Maintain current funding for minor works and capital upgrade of state owned premises as Family Centres and Community Based Child Care Centres. | No specific budget allocation | The Department for Communities will receive \$1.1million to recruit additional child care licensing officers to enable annual site visits and increased random spot checks of licensed child care related services. |
| Fund a range of appropriate support services for grandparents who are caring for their grandchildren. | No specific budget allocation | |
| That the State Government adequately resource the recently established Office of Commissioner for Children and Young People to the sum of \$5 million per year. | No specific budget allocation | The Government has made no amendment to their 2005/06 budget announcement of \$1.5 million for the establishment of the Office of the Commissioner. |
| Commit funding in the long term to increase funding for the provision of services for young people. | No specific budget allocation | |