

March 19, 2015

MEDIA RELEASE



\$43 Million to Move Vulnerable Kids Out Of Residential Care

The Foster Care Association of Victoria (FCAV) were pleased to see the announcement by the Minister for Families and Children, Jenny Mikakos, that \$43 million will be invested in new Targeted Care Packages for children in out of home care. We see from the release that the packages are intended to address the shortage of home-based care available to children and young people, resulting in some being placed in residential care as a stopgap measure.

Under the new system, each child's needs will be assessed and carers will receive tailored supports, with the child's best interests at the centre of all decision making. The FCAV are interested in seeing how this will be rolled out and what the breakdown of the investment will go towards staff and what will go towards carers and also the needs of children and young people in care.

We note that the first priorities are to move primary school age children who are living in residential care into home-based care and that the funding is available immediately and children will start benefiting from these new packages in April 2015.

While FCAV welcomes this move, the children in residential care are often those with the highest needs, and foster carers who are going to provide care for complex children and young people will require a great deal of support.

The Foster Care Association of Victoria renews its call for the overall rates of carer allowance to be increased, that ongoing training and easy-to-access brokerage funding for all children in care, be made available. See <http://www.savefostercare.org.au/>

"People take on the role of foster caring to ensure that vulnerable children have loving homes where they can heal from traumatic events. We need a system which supports their good work. This includes financial resourcing for therapeutic training and support workers available to meet placement needs." *Katie Hooper, Chief Executive Officer, FCAV*

For all media enquiries please contact:

Katie Hooper, Chief Executive Officer, FCAV: (03) 9416 4292 or 0437 899 022