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## **MEDIA RELEASE**



### **Roadmap for Reform and State budget**

On behalf of foster carers around the state, the Foster Care Association welcomes the release of the *Roadmap for Reform: Strong Families, Safe Children*, launched by the Minister for Youth and Family Affairs, Ms. Jenny Mikakos, this week.

While the Roadmap rightly focuses on supporting vulnerable families, the funding announced with the *Roadmap to Reform* includes a significant Out of Home Care investment which showcases the Minister's vision for a cultural shift in the child protection and Out of Home Care sector.

The investment in initiatives specifically aimed at foster care, totaling over \$30 million over the next two years, indicates Victorian foster carers are being heard.

The Foster Care Association applauds the Minister's reform agenda recognising the shortfalls in foster carer training, support and financial resourcing. The Association hopes that "...providing more support to children in home-based care and their carers," will mean:

- An increase in the Victorian foster care allowance to reach parity with the national average.
- Funding for additional training specifically designed for foster carers and focused to meet their particular care needs.
- Increased, targeted support for our current foster carers, specifically therapeutic support that assists carers to work with the children and young people in their care, to heal.

We hope the Minister will continue to seek input from foster carers and the Association on the roll out of these reforms to encourage the development of a system which works for all stakeholders, especially the carers who provide 24/7 care of Victoria's most vulnerable children.

We hope the upcoming State budget reflects the need for further investment in foster care; to take the pressure off the system, and to provide best practice supports to the carers who are at the heart of home-based care and ultimately the children and young people in their care.

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**For all media enquiries please contact:**

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