



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Initial Response to 2012 – 2013 ACT Budget

The Youth Coalition of the ACT, the peak body for youth affairs and young people aged 12 – 25, acknowledges additional funding for child protection and youth justice in today's 2012 – 2013 ACT Budget. However, Budget measures do not invest enough in early intervention and prevention for the most vulnerable young people and families in our community.

'The objectives of the ACT Budget include targeted investments to reduce future costs and address chronic disadvantage,' said Director Emma Robertson. 'We were looking for investment in community services to support young people and their families, which has not occurred.'

Last week the Youth Coalition and Families ACT, the peak for family support services, urgently called on the ACT Government to allocate further funding to the newly established Children, Youth, and Family Services Program (CYFSP). The CYFSP funds a range of community-based services to support vulnerable children, young people and families to prevent them from becoming involved with Care and Protection and Youth Justice.

'We are disappointed that no additional funding has been allocated to these vital community-based services. The youth and family sector is already stretched. Until we prioritise funding support for families prior to statutory involvement, we will see continuing pressure on consecutive budgets to allocate money to crisis responses.'

Funding in the ACT Budget to support vulnerable children and young people includes:

- \$15.4 million over four years towards Care and Protection;
- \$5.3 million over four years for recruitment and retention of frontline Care and Protection staff;
- \$0.6 million over three years towards strengthening Care and Protection Services;
- \$5.5 million for initiatives in Youth Justice including:
  - Additional staff at Bimberi Youth Detention Centre;
  - Specialist therapeutic services for young people already in the justice system;
  - A community based mobile intensive support service; and,
  - Targeted support with a brokerage component.

**For further comment please contact Emma Robertson on 0422 665 469**