



youth
coalition
of the ACT

ACT Budget 2024-2025

**What's in it for young
people and their
families?**

The Youth Coalition of the ACT acknowledge the Traditional Owners and continuing Custodians of the lands of the ACT and pay our respects to the Elders, families and ancestors.

We acknowledge that the effect of forced removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people from their families as well as past racist policies and actions continues today. We acknowledge that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples hold distinctive rights as the original people of modern-day Australia including the right to a distinct status and culture, self-determination and land. We celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and the invaluable contribution they make to our community.

About the Youth Coalition of the ACT

The Youth Coalition of the ACT is the peak youth affairs body in the Australian Capital Territory. The Youth Coalition's vision is for an ACT community that values and provides opportunity, participation, justice and equity for all young people. The Youth Coalition undertakes policy development, sector development, research and evaluation, advocacy and representation activities to improve outcomes for young people and their families.

A key role of the Youth Coalition is the development and analysis of ACT social policy and program decisions that affect young people and youth services. The Youth Coalition facilitates the development of strong linkages and promotes collaboration between the community, government and private sectors to achieve better outcomes for young people in the ACT.

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Response to the ACT Budget 2024-25

The Youth Coalition's response to the ACT Budget is structured by the following components:

1. **ACT Budget Initiatives**
2. **Areas requiring further attention:**
 - a. The ACT is experiencing a child and youth mental health crisis:
 - Investment in the ACT Mental Health NGO Sub-Sector
 - Investment in Canberra Health Services
 - Investment in system coordination and support
 - b. Preventing and responding to racism in schools and services
 - c. Adequate indexation for community services

A full summary of relevant Budget initiatives is provided at the end of the document.

ACT Budget initiatives

The ACT Budget 2024-2025 includes a limited number of initiatives for young people and families; many of which build upon previous Budget initiatives. A full summary of new Budget announcements that affect young people and their families is provided at the end of this briefing, along with areas for future consideration. Key items affecting young people and families include:

1. **Continued delivery of child and youth mental health programs:** \$1.6 million over one year to support continuation of WOKE, Stepping Stones, MindMap Youth Navigation portal, and Youth Aware Mental Health (YAM).
2. **Support for out-of-home care and child protection system improvements:** \$10 million to improve supports for young adults leaving the OOHC system up to the age of 21, \$1.7 million to establish an External Merits Review process for child protection decisions, and \$9.9 million to continue delivery of the *Next Steps for Our Kids Strategy*, including Family Group Conferencing. This Budget also delivers \$1.6 million to support a phased transition to the new Children, Young People and Families Panel of service providers.
3. **Support for Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) and programs:** \$4.1 million to establish an ACCO Establishment and Expansion Fund (CSD), \$897,000 to design a new youth mental health service and measures to improve cultural responsiveness within the mental health sector (ACTHD).
4. **Investment in frontline domestic, family and sexual violence services:** \$2.5 million towards frontline responses to sexual violence, including the Canberra Rape Crisis Centre. \$7.4 million for frontline DFV services, including YWCA Canberra, Domestic Violence Crisis Service, Beryl Women Inc, EveryMan, Legal Aid, and Victim Support ACT. An additional \$350,000 to develop and deliver a training package for information-sharing entities; and \$375,000 towards increasing understanding of and improving responses to coercive control.

The Youth Coalition **welcomes the one-off funding for vital child and youth mental health programs, particularly WOKE and Stepping Stones**. As discussed in our earlier Budget Submission, these clinical programs provide specialised, evidence-based models of therapeutic support to children, young people and families, that are difficult to access elsewhere.

The University of Canberra WOKE Program provides effective support to young people experiencing emotional dysregulation and suicidal ideation, who are at high risk of suicide and self-harm. Stepping Stones, delivered by Marymead CatholicCare Canberra and Goulburn provides therapeutic support to children aged 0-12 who are impacted by trauma, and their families. Each of these programs fill key gaps within the continuum of mental health support for children and young people, and respond directly to the 'missing middle'.

We value the efforts of the ACT Government to continue to fund these programs in order to avoid service system gaps, arising due to time-limited Commonwealth funds. While this short-term funding enables these programs to remain operational for the next 12 months, we continue to hold concerns about their long-term viability to operate within uncertain conditions. This is discussed further below, in relation to the **Child and Youth Mental Health Crisis**. We also welcome the announcement of funds to support design of an **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth mental health service** and await further details of this initiative.

The Youth Coalition welcomes the investment to **improve supports for young adults transitioning out of the out-of-home care system, up to the age of 21**, and funding to continue implementation of the *Next Steps for Our Kids Strategy*. Improved supports for care-leavers have been long-awaited and strongly supported within the ACT and nationally.

The **direct investment in community-based frontline services responding to sexual violence, and domestic and family violence** is a necessary investment, alongside the continued capability-building initiatives underway and planned, such as those relating to information-sharing and coercive control. The Youth Coalition continues to experience high demand from the community and government workforce for our 'Talk to Them' training, which aims to build capability among those who support young people to recognise and respond to domestic and family violence.

Areas requiring further attention

1. The ACT is experiencing a child and youth mental health crisis, which is expected to worsen

It is generally understood that the ACT is experiencing a child and youth mental health crisis, which is expected to worsen. Members of the *ACT Child and Youth Mental Health Sector Alliance* have expressed concerns regarding the increasing rates of child and youth self-harm, suicidality and psychological distress, including at younger ages. Statistics presented in the *ACT Vital Signs Report 2021* demonstrated an increase in youth self-harm, suicidality and psychological distress, particularly for LGBTQI+ young people¹.

¹ Hands Across Canberra & Snow Foundation. (2021). *Canberra Vital Signs 2021*. <https://www.snowfoundation.org.au/publication/vital-signs-canberra-2021/>

Furthermore, there are concerns that as children who were young during the early 'COVID-era' progress into the middle years and adolescence, a further 'tidal wave' of children and young people experiencing psychological distress is approaching. Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) data describes a 'concerning trend' of an increasing number of children in the ACT starting school with developmental vulnerabilities in one or more domains than in previous years; and more-so than the national average².

A system-wide approach is required to reduce and respond to the prevalence and severity of mental health distress for children and young people. This includes three key components for investment: (a) the ACT Mental Health NGO Sub-Sector, (b) Canberra Health Services, and (c) System Support and Coordination.

a. Investment in the ACT Mental Health NGO Sub-Sector

The Youth Coalition is concerned that the **overall pool of funding available through the forthcoming NGO mental health commissioning process is inadequate** to respond to the level of current and future demand from children, young people and families; particularly as this demand is expected to increase into the future. Increased funding is necessary to support the NGO sub-sector to adequately respond to this rising need.

While we welcome the announcement in the ACT Budget for continuation of existing community-based mental health programs, this funding is only short-term. Without longer-term planning for their continuation, or an increase in the pool of funding available through forthcoming mental health commissioning processes, the **viability of these programs and the broader child and youth NGO mental health sub-sector is at risk**.

Our recent [consultations and submission](#) regarding the ACT Health Directorate (ACT-HD) funded NGO mental health sub-sector, found that the NGO sub-sector is often the safety net for children, young people and families who experience formal and informal barriers to accessing other services, including private sector. This sub-sector is seen as the opportunity to provide innovative and creative community-based supports for children and young people in the 'missing middle'.

Recommendations for ACT Mental Health NGO Sub-Sector Investment:

1. Increase the overall pool of funding available through the mental health NGO commissioning process, to respond to current and future demand from children, young people and families.
2. Develop longer-term plans to support programs that received short-term funding through the 2024-25 ACT Budget.

² Australian Government. (2021). *Australian Early Development Census 2021 Results for the ACT*. https://www.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/2404386/Australian-Early-Development-Census-2021-results-for-the-ACT.pdf

b. Investment in Canberra Health Services to support young people with mental health concerns

In our submission to the 2024-25 ACT Budget, we called for funding to support the CAMHS Single Point of Access (SPA) Pilot, which aims to improve CAMHS' approaches to engagement, intake and assessment; and to allow CAMHS to more effectively respond to community need.

The recent release of a [report by the ACT Audit Office](#) into the planning and delivery of services for young people with moderate to severe mental illness found that:

- Demand for CAMHS has increased, and there are long wait times to access support;
- There is increased demand and longer wait times on the northside of Canberra, prompting a recommendation that the North Community Team be expanded, particularly into the northern suburbs.
- There is a gap in service provision for young people once they turn 18 years old and are no longer eligible to access CAMHS, and transitions at this point are not well managed.

We are aware that CAMHS receives a **high number of referrals and requests for support from families in the Gungahlin region**, and we note that there is currently no physical premises for CAMHS in this region. The requirement that young people and families travel to Belconnen to access CAMHS is a barrier to access and engagement.

In 2023, the Youth Coalition conducted consultations with young people and parents regarding their experiences of accessing CAMHS. This identified the need for **improved transition pathways for young people turning 18 years old**. CHS Adult Mental Health Services (AMHS) generally work to a higher threshold of mental health severity, resulting in a system gap for young adults who require acute support but do not meet the threshold to access AMHS. The age cut-off for access to CAMHS once young people turn 18 does not align with community-based mental health services, which usually enable young people to access services up until the age of 25. Scoping is required to examine the **feasibility of establishing a 'young adult' program, which may be delivered collaboratively between CAMHS and AMHS**. This could support young adults who require support beyond the age of 18 but who may not be 'severe enough' to access AMHS services.

Currently, **young people aged 12-17 with co-occurring mental health concerns and intellectual disability (ID) experience barriers to accessing support**. While children can access community paediatric services up to age 12; young people cannot access the *Mental Health Service for People with Intellectual Disability* (MHID) until after they turn 18. As a consultancy service providing clinical assessment and recommendations, MHID provides integrated support to people with co-occurring mental health and ID, and acts as a 'bridge' between systems. Expanding access to MHID to young people from the age of 12, including those with moderate ID presentations, would allow these young people and their families to access specialist, expert knowledge; whilst supporting their therapeutic relationship with their existing practitioner or service provider to continue (e.g. mental health or NDIS) to continue. This would increase services' capability to support this cohort of young people, enable shared care, and better respond to the needs of young people with complex and co-occurring needs, as identified through the [ACT 'Missing Middle' report](#).

Recommendations for Canberra Health Services investment:

1. Establish a CAMHS clinic in the Gungahlin region and increase the capacity of the North Community Team.
2. Design/scoping work for a 'young adult' program, delivered collaboratively between CAMHS and AMHS, to better support young people aged 18-25.
3. Expand access to the *Mental Health Service for People with Intellectual Disability* program to young people from the age of 12, including those with moderate to severe ID presentations.

c. Investment in System Coordination and Support

Dedicated funding was not provided in the ACT Budget 2024-25 for the delivery of the *ACT Child and Youth Mental Health Sector Alliance*. Our recent consultations demonstrated that community services do not want to be siloed, but that this is often created through funding streams. **System-level collaboration and coordination will not happen organically**: this requires dedicated resourcing and intentional, ongoing and supported activities. The timing and fragmented nature of commissioning processes prevent genuine cross-sector collaboration.

There is a **strong benefit to supporting cross-sector initiatives that enable integrated systems of support and capability-building across sub-sectors**. The Alliance has already commenced work in these areas and is progressing projects to improve system coordination and collaboration, including improved information-sharing processes. The Alliance is well placed to continue to support this work and to reduce siloes, working in partnership with the ACT Government and Capital Health Network.

Early feedback on the Alliance suggests that **members value (i) the system-level change that can occur through a shared mechanism that is greater than the sum of its parts, (ii) the role of lived experience within the Alliance, and (iii) the ability for stakeholders to work together to solve problems**. The Youth Reference Group within the Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing, and the appointment of a Director of Lived Experience, are highly valued functions within the broader sector. The establishment of these mechanisms, and their position within the ACT Government, **suggest a genuine commitment from Government towards valuing and promoting lived experience** in system-level planning, design, delivery and review.

Recommendations for System Coordination and Support Investment:

1. Continue funding for the *ACT Child and Youth Mental Health Sector Alliance*, which enables system-level change through a shared mechanism between the community and government and supports stakeholders to work together to solve problems.
2. Continue to support and build upon initiatives within ACT Government to integrate 'lived experience', including the Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing Youth Reference Group.

2. Preventing and responding to racism in schools and services

In 2023, the report [‘It really stabs me: From resignation to resilience – children and young people’s experiences of racism in the ACT’](#) was published by the ACT Human Rights Commission. It reported on a project conducted by Curijo Pty Ltd, Multicultural Hub Canberra and the ACT Children and Young People Commissioner. This research consulted with 2,456 children and young people about their views on and experiences of racism in the ACT.

The research found that **children and young people experience racism ‘often and everywhere’**, in particular, schools; with children and young people describing experiences of racism from peers and also teachers. Children and young people reported experiencing and witnessing racism in public spaces, including public transport, online and through sport. Young people highlighted the inadequacy of adult responses when they reported incidences of racism, feeling ignored and dismissed, including within schools.

Following the publication of the report, a cross-sector working group has been established to progress anti-racism strategies within the community and is seeking funding to progress a pilot project. The pilot project will support a small number of schools and services to participate in workshops to co-design a customised pledge with young people and teachers/executives in the school; to enact principles and practices to prevent racism, and to develop appropriate responses to children and young people impacted by racism within their school. The pilot will develop a range of resources and be evaluated to assess feasibility for expansion to other sites.

Recommendations for future Investment:

1. Provide adequate and appropriate funding for initiatives that build the capability of schools, services, sports groups and public transport to prevent and respond to incidences of racism against children and young people.

3. Inadequate indexation for community services

A range of non-government organisations have expressed deep concerns that the indexation formula used by the ACT Government is inadequate and does not enable organisations to account for increasing workforce costs. In their response to the ACT Budget 2024-25, ACTCOSS identified that the current formula **does not include costs associated with superannuation and long service leave; thereby leaving community organisations with a funding gap**. This results in organisations being forced to reduce their service delivery, in a context where demand from people seeking support is increasing. We note that the ACT Government’s response to the Counting the Costs report agreed in principle to adopting a revised approach to indexation, as part of a broader approach to supporting sector sustainability.

Recommendations for future Investment:

1. Review the current approach to indexation of community services, to ensure that service providers are enabled to cover their increasing annual workforce costs, to prevent a reduction in service delivery.

Where to from here?

This Budget Briefing will be provided to the ACT Legislative Assembly and ACT Government Directorates to inform the Budget Estimates process over coming weeks. It will also inform our ongoing advocacy work. We will continue to work closely with the community sector and the ACT Government to progress the core priorities outlined in this briefing. For more information, contact:

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Summary of ACT Budget new funding announcements affecting young people and their families

For a comprehensive overview and analysis of spending across the broader ACT community, please refer to the ACTCOSS Budget Response.

Initiative	Funding	Details
Community Services Directorate		
Building capacity and capability of Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations	\$4.1 million over four years, with most costs offset	<p>The Government will establish an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation Establishment and Expansion Fund (AEEF). The AEEF will support Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) to build organisational capacity and capability, and develop and expand services that improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Canberrans.</p> <p>The Government will also invest towards establishing and operating the national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Assembly to deliver an Indigenous-led Review in support of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.</p>
Continuation of the Children and Young People Equipment Loan Scheme (CAYPELS)	\$586,000 over four years	The Government will provide funding for the continuation of the Children and Young People Equipment Loan Scheme which provides free short-term loans of specialist paediatric equipment and assistive technology for children and young people with disability or mobility needs.
Continuing the Family Settlement Assistance Grant and Refugee Asylum Seeker and Humanitarian Programs	\$350,000 over one year	The Government will continue funding the Australian Red Cross for the Family Settlement Assistance Grants Program and extend the Refugee, Asylum Seeker and Humanitarian Fund.
Cost of living support for vulnerable Canberrans - emergency material, financial aid and food relief	\$913,000 over one year	The Government will increase support for emergency material and financial aid programs and for food relief services to provide additional cost of living support for vulnerable Canberrans.
Creating a more inclusive Canberra through the ACT Disability Strategy 2024-2033	\$3.5 million over four years	<p>The Government will provide funding to implement the <i>ACT Disability Strategy 2024-2033 and First Action Plan (2024-2026)</i>. The Strategy will focus on changing attitudes and building capacity across the community. The Strategy and First Action Plan build on the ACT's other interconnected strategies, including the ACT Inclusive Education Strategy 2024-2034, the ACT Disability Health Strategy 2024-2033 and the ACT Disability Justice Strategy 2019-2029.</p> <p>This initiative is partially funded through a contribution from the Commonwealth Government for four new permanent adult Changing Places facilities in Canberra.</p>

		Funding of \$1.456 million towards establishing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisation disability service provider is offset from the Healing and Reconciliation Fund.
Establishing a Disability Reform Taskforce	\$2.1 million over two years, offset	The Government will establish a Taskforce to progress an initial service design and delivery response to the National Disability Insurance Scheme Review and to recommendations of the Final Report of the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability.
External Merits Review of Child Protection Decisions	\$1.7 million over four years	The Government will implement an External Merits Review (EMR) mechanism within the ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal (ACAT) by 1 July 2025, to allow for external reviews of child protection decisions. This initiative will support ACAT to operationalise the EMR mechanism.
Improved support for young adults leaving the out-of-home care system	\$10 million over four years	This funding will support implementation of the <i>Children and Young People Amendment Bill (No.2)</i> which will make extended support available for all young adults transitioning from out of home care until they turn 21. This initiative supports a new model of after care support, consistent with the needs of care leavers. The Government will also fund an external evaluation of the new support system.
Initial Response to the Sexual Assault (Police) Review	\$380,000 over one year	The Government will provide funding to Victim Support ACT and the Canberra Rape Crisis Centre to improve support for victim-survivors of sexual assault. The Government is planning to deliver a detailed response to the Sexual Assault (Police) Review report later in 2024.
Next Steps for Our Kids Strategy	\$9.9 million over four years, with some costs offset	This initiative continues the Government's strategic investment into the child protection and Out of Home Care systems, guided by <i>Next Steps for our Kids 2022-2030</i> . This funding will support delivery of therapeutic supports in the ACT for vulnerable young people and their families. It includes new investment of \$2.19 million in Family Group Conferencing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, which is offset from the Healing and Reconciliation Fund, and support for parents and families with disability.
Out of Home Care – Establishment and Transition of New System	\$1.6 million over one year	The Government will provide additional funding to support transition to the new Children, Young People and Families Panel. This will include ensuring continuity of service arrangements for children and young people and supporting a phased approach for new panel providers to deliver a range of statutory and non-statutory services for children, young people and families.
Supporting frontline responses to sexual violence	\$2.5 million over three years	The Government will increase investment in frontline sexual violence services in the ACT. This includes funding to increase the Canberra Rape Crisis Centre's capacity to deliver crisis support and therapeutic counselling to ensure victim-survivors receive the supports they immediately need. Additionally, funding is allocated to develop a First Nations complex trauma recovery model in partnership with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in line with priority reform 3 of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.
Safer Families – Continuation of the	\$267,000 over four years, some	The Government will continue to invest in the Domestic and Family Violence Death Review including funds to maintain the

Domestic and Family Violence Review	costs offset	data base, necessary licensing arrangements and the statutory review in accordance with legislative requirements.
Safer Families - Domestic and Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme	\$350,000 over one year, offset	The Government will support the development and delivery of a centralised training package for information sharing entities to build capability to understand and implement the domestic and family violence information sharing scheme.
Safer Families - Investing in frontline domestic and family violence services	\$7.4 million over three years	The Government will increase investment in frontline domestic and family violence services in the ACT. This includes critical support for victim survivors and funding to increase the capacity to work directly with perpetrators comprising funding for YWCA Canberra, Domestic Violence Crisis Service, Beryl Women Inc, EveryMan, Legal Aid and Victim Support ACT.
Safer Families - Responding to Coercive Control	\$375,000 over one year	A Coercive Control Response Package will increase understanding and improve responses to coercive control. The Government will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provide training for ACT Policing and Courts to better detect, assess and respond to coercive control; - deliver a community education campaign to increase understanding of coercive control, with a focus on culturally and linguistically diverse communities; and - in partnership with the domestic and family violence sector, better integrate coercive control into the ACT Domestic and Family Violence Risk Assessment Framework.
Education Directorate		
Equitable enrolment for all students	\$2.8 million over four years	The Government will provide funding to support more students with additional needs in ACT public schools. Support will be targeted at students with disability, students with lower socio-economic status, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
Future of Education Equity Fund - Cost of Living Relief	\$1 million over one year	The Government will provide funding to increase the Future of Education Equity Fund for the 2024 school year, to support families with educational expenses like school uniforms, school excursions and sport equipment.
Continuation of Head Start	\$1.6 million over three years	The Government will provide funding for the continuation of the Head Start Program by supporting an additional cohort of 50 students to commence their Australian School Based Apprenticeship at the start of the 2025 school year.
Continuation of Meals in Schools	\$3.9 million over one year, most costs offset	The Government will provide additional funding to support the provision of breakfast and lunch for three days a week at five ACT public schools through the Meals in Schools Pilot Program.
Literacy and Numeracy - Strong Foundations	\$24.8 million over four years, most costs offset	The Government will provide funding to commence implementation of all eight recommendations from the independent inquiry into literacy and numeracy in ACT public schools - Final Report of the ACT Government's Literacy and Numeracy Education Expert Panel. This initiative will deliver consistent teaching practices, common assessments, resources and support for parents and professional learning for teachers, school leaders and learning assistants across all ACT public schools.

ACT Health Directorate and Canberra Health Services		
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mental health initiatives	\$897,000 over two years, some costs offset	The Government will support culturally appropriate mental health services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This investment includes the design of a new youth mental health service and measures to improve cultural responsiveness within the mental health sector.
Community-based crisis response	\$1.9 million over four years, offset	The Government will provide enhanced support to people facing mental health distress. This work includes redeveloping the existing Step Up and Step Down at Home program to align its delivery with the Distress Brief Intervention model – a framework that provides a time-limited and supportive framework for frontline and community services to respond to people experiencing distress.
Continuing Pill Testing	\$1.8 million over three years, most costs offset	The Government will continue the Australian-first ACT drug checking service. This investment aims to reduce harm from alcohol and other drugs in line with the ACT Drug Strategy Action Plan 2022-2026.
Housing for Vulnerable People	\$2.7 million over four years, offset	The Government will provide additional support to help improve mental health outcomes for people with high intensity mental health support needs. This initiative includes community-based programs that support people with severe mental illness to live independently and participate in the community. Supports include psychosocial support, tenancy support and clinical mental health services.
Ongoing delivery of youth mental health services	\$1.6 million over one year, offset	The Government will support continuation of the following youth mental health support programs: the MindMap Online Youth Navigation Portal, Stepping Stones, Youth Aware of Mental Health, and the dialectical behaviour therapy program WOKE.
Ongoing support for the second PACER team	\$4.2 million over four years	The Government will provide ongoing funding for the second Police, Ambulance and Clinician Early Response (PACER) team. This mental health emergency program provides an integrated model of care bringing together police, paramedics and mental health clinicians.
Psychosocial support needs	\$341,000 over one year	The Government will provide funding to continue the expanded Detention Exit Community Outreach Program to provide mental health and psychosocial supports for people with mental illness who are exiting detention, while they transition back to the ACT community.
Smoking and Vaping Cessation Activities	\$960,000 over three years, offset	The Government will provide funding to Quitline and similar services to further support people in the ACT to stop smoking and vaping.
New health centres across the ACT	\$52.8 million over four years	The Government will construct new health centres in North Gungahlin and the Inner South and undertake design work for the health centre in West Belconnen. These facilities will provide integrated multi-disciplinary health care with a focus on preventive care and advice, early intervention, and the management of acute and chronic illness. These investments expand on the network of community health infrastructure across the ACT providing more services where people need them, including nurse-led Walk-in Centres.

Expanding paediatric services at Canberra Hospital and in the community	\$24.8 million over four years	This investment will support an additional eight paediatric beds at Canberra Hospital, and address a range of high priority actions within the Child and Adolescent Clinical Services Plan 2023-2030.
Housing ACT		
Continuing the growth and renewal of public housing and social housing accelerator	\$50.9 million over one year, offset	The Government will continue to support the growth and renewal of public housing stock to deliver 400 additional homes and renew 1,000 homes by 2026-27. Government will also add further homes to the public housing portfolio as part of the Commonwealth-funded Social Housing Accelerator Program.
More funding for homelessness services and programs	\$6.5 million over four years, most costs offset	The Government will provide additional funding and continue specialist programs to respond to increased demand for homelessness services in the ACT and address areas of critical and complex need. This will increase funding for Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations providing specialist supported crisis and transitional services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness, as well as fund a community cohesion program at Oaks Estate and fund the delivery of services for the Education First Youth Foyer.
Justice and Community Safety Directorate		
Additional Magistrate for the ACT Magistrates Court	\$1.4 million over four years	The Government will provide additional resourcing for the ACT Magistrates Court, Family Violence Court and the Childrens Court to address increased numbers of lodgements and complexity of matters and support timely delivery of justice services to the community.
Continuing the Care and Protection Intensive List	\$682,000 over one year, offset	The Government will continue to support the operation of the Care and Protective Intensive List (CPIL), within the ACT Children's Court, in 2024-25. This initiative extends the recent Government actions in 2023-24 Budget initiative, to provide intensive management and therapeutic support to parents involved in care and protection matters and deliver better outcomes for children and young people.
Disability Justice Strategy – Second Action Plan	\$616,000 over two years, some costs offset	The Government will provide funding for Disability Liaison Officers within the Domestic Violence Crisis Service, Aboriginal Legal Services and Victim Support ACT to support improved access and inclusion across the justice system.
Justice Housing Program Continuation and Expansion	\$5.1 million over two years, most costs offset	The Government will continue the Justice Housing Program and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men's Transitional Accommodation Program, to provide short-term transitional accommodation and wraparound support for those eligible for bail, parole or community based orders, who otherwise would be incarcerated due to a lack of suitable accommodation or have no alternatives on release from a head sentence.
Reducing over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in the	\$9.4 million over three years, some costs offset	The Government will continue to engage with the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to deliver initiatives to reduce the overrepresentation of First Nations people in the ACT criminal justice system. This will include the continuation of the

ACT Criminal Justice System		<p>Circle Sentencing Court and ACT Corrective Services alternative reporting sites.</p> <p>This initiative also extends funding for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander service providers to continue to deliver Empowerment Yarning Circles, Ngurrumbai Bail Support Program, the Yarrabi Bamirr expansion and the Yurwan Ghuda On Country Program for young people.</p>
Rent Relief Fund Extension	\$1.6 million over one year, some costs offset	The Government will extend the operation of the Rent Relief Fund to assist vulnerable, low-income Canberrans experiencing rental stress or financial hardship, due to current rental market conditions and rising cost of living challenges.
RR25by25 Justice Futures Fund	\$344,000 over one year	The Government will fund community engagement and co-design of a Justice Futures Fund to support the delivery of community-led programs focussed on addressing gaps in the justice system and improving criminal justice outcomes.
Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate		
ACT Apprentice and Trainee Concession	\$1.6 million over one year	The Government will provide currently enrolled apprentices and trainees residing in the ACT with a one-off cost of living support payment of \$250 in 2024-25.
Affordable Housing Project Fund 2024-25	\$10.6 million over four years	The Government will provide an additional \$20 million for the Affordable Housing Project Fund to support the delivery of community and affordable rental housing in the ACT and help meet the commitment to deliver 600 affordable rental homes by 2025-26.
Improving energy efficiency of Canberra's public housing	Costs offset	The Government will fund the electrification and insulation of all feasible public and community housing by 2030. This will improve the thermal comfort for households living in these properties.
Support for vulnerable Canberrans	\$516,000 over one year	The Government will provide funding to Roundabout Canberra, Scouts ACT, Fearless Women and Women's Health Matters to ensure the ongoing delivery, and piloting of new programs to support vulnerable members of the community.
Energy Bill Relief - Extension and Expansion	\$63.9 million over two years, with most costs offset	The Government will support the delivery of energy bill assistance to all households and eligible small businesses in the ACT from the Commonwealth's extension of the Energy Bill Relief Fund across 2024-25. The initiative builds on the existing energy bill relief and will provide \$300 to all households and \$375 to eligible small businesses across 2024-25.
Implementing the Capital of Equality LGBTQIA+ Strategy	\$300,000 over one year	The Government will expand the Capital of Equality Grants program and provide additional resourcing to the Office of LGBTQIA+ Affairs to implement the initial tranche of actions from the First Action Plan (2024-2026) of the Capital of Equality Strategy 2024-29.