

Child Protection & Safety



Main Investments

Where is the money going?	How much is being invested?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing responses to the recommendations handed down by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ \$115 million towards the National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse. ○ \$2 million to support the expansion of mandatory reporting and \$2.9 million to improve capabilities to investigate offences. ○ \$2 million to build research and evidence-based practices for responding to child sexual abuse and harmful sexual behaviours. ○ \$1.4 million to fund the National Centre and WA Centre for the prevention of Child Sexual Abuse. ○ \$2.7 million for a Harmful Sexual Behaviour Intervention Program. ○ \$4.2 million in funding to implement a first phase of proposed Working with Children's Check Reforms, including \$2.4 million allocated from the Digital Capability Fund. ○ \$14.3 million allocated to regulation and quality assurance to safeguard children. This is targeted as increasing the capacity of the Department of Communities to implement Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse commitments on the reportable conduct scheme and implementation of national principles. 	<p>\$152.8 million</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A boost to child protection and support services to help keep Western Australian children safe. This includes an allocation of \$75.2m to enhance child protection services, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Appointment of a Chief Practitioner for Child Protection within the Department of Communities. ○ Funding to expand and enhance earlier intervention services, including intensive family support and outreach services for at-risk young people and their families – including trials of the program in the South West and Halls Creek. ○ Additional funding to meet the cost of delivering essential child protection services, including recruitment of an additional 36 child protection workers. 	<p>\$114 million</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Roll-out of the Target 120 program to nine additional regional and metropolitan sites, including four sites in the Kimberley (also noted within the Youth Justice section). Target 120 provides wraparound family support to prolific young offenders at risk of engagement with the justice system. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Funding to Aboriginal Representative Organisations (AROs) in Armadale and the Kimberley region to empower Aboriginal families and support them to keep their children safe. AROs are new requirements under the Children and Community Services Act Amendments to ensure Aboriginal people are involved in the decision-making processes of Aboriginal young people in care. 	\$1.3 million
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Implement of the Aboriginal Family Led Decision Making pilot program in Mirrabooka and the Mid West and Gascoyne regions, aiming to reduce the overrepresentation of Aboriginal children and young people in the child protection system. This program provides a culturally safe space to support family to make culturally-based and family-driven decisions. 	\$715,000

Our Response

<i>The good:</i>	<i>The bad:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Funding under the <i>Earlier Intervention and Family Support Strategy</i> is welcomed. This includes the Intensive Family Support Service and the Aboriginal In-Home Support Service. These are positive investments, as these services keep young people and their families together, and a review has found high rates of children involved in these services not being in care 12 months later. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Funding for early intervention as a proportion of overall spend has stagnated or declined over a significant portion of the last few years and so this funding is only a small portion of what is required to enable the child protection system to better address the pathways that lead children and young people to enter out of home care. Our consultations (such as the State of the Youth Sector Forum) repeatedly hear the need for greater focus on prevention initiatives, as many issues are only address when they reach crisis point.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Funding for Aboriginal community-based services such as the Aboriginal Family Led Decision Making Pilot, Aboriginal In-Home Support Service, and the Family Support Networks are highly positive. These initiatives support a reduction of Aboriginal children and young people in care. Aboriginal Family Led Decision Making is an important area to support self-determination for Aboriginal families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Target 120 is set for a significant expansion into regions in the Kimberley and Pilbara. While we applaud more investment in family-focused services for vulnerable young people, this expansion has occurred prior to evaluation of existing services. We wish to see results of an evaluation of the service be made public.

<p>and communities and to address the high overrepresentation of Aboriginal children in WA's child protection system.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This budget has additional funding to improve the delivery of services and support for children and young people currently engaged in out of home care and delivers a small boost in funding for early intervention and family support services.	