



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

*Wednesday 19 June, 2024*

### **FAMS RESPONDS TO NSW BUDGET: MORE EARLY INTERVENTION FUNDING NEEDED TO PROTECT VULNERABLE CHILDREN**

Fams, the peak body for NSW not-for-profit family and children's services, has welcomed the NSW Budget but expressed concern around a lack of early intervention and prevention funding for vulnerable children.

Fams CEO Susan Watson said the \$224 million investment into the foster care system is a good step forward, but it doesn't tackle the underlying issues.

"The \$224 million investment into foster care to better support the 14,000 children and young people in NSW who cannot live safely at home with their families is significant," Ms Watson said.

"However, this is only a band aid solution to a much bigger problem.

"We have said before that unless we fund the services that will stop children from experiencing harm and ending up in bad situations including foster care in the first place, we are just treading water.

"The frontline workers in the early intervention and prevention not-for-profit sector are achieving some incredible outcomes despite a lack of resources.

"The families they see are much more complex now than 10 years ago. And the added burden of the cost-of-living crisis means services are stretched to the limit."

Ms Watson said these workers are also being slugged with a 31 per cent increase to get a Working with Children Check, rising from \$80 to \$105 with annual increases going forward.

"The NSW Government needs to give our sector more sustainable funding to keep children and families safe and together, not charge our workers more to be able to do their job.

"We understand the NSW Government is facing significant budgetary pressures, but we cannot leave our most vulnerable children and families behind – which is our very real fear with this Budget."

For more information on Fams, visit [www.fams.asn.au](http://www.fams.asn.au)

**Media contact: Billy Briggs | 0474 697 235**