



Analysis of the 2018-19 ACT Budget

Overview, Priorities for Young People, and Media Release

June 2018

WWW.YOUTHCOALITION.NET

The Youth Coalition of the ACT acknowledges the Ngunnawal people as the traditional owners and continuing custodians of the lands of the ACT and we pay our respects to the Elders, families and ancestors.

We acknowledge that the effect of forced removal of Indigenous children from their families as well as past racist policies and actions continues today.

We acknowledge that the Indigenous people hold distinctive rights as the original people of modern day Australia including the right to a distinct status and culture, self-determination and land. The Youth Coalition of the ACT celebrates Ngunnawal culture and the invaluable contribution it makes to our community.

The Youth Coalition of the ACT ('Youth Coalition') is the peak youth affairs body in the Australian Capital Territory and is responsible for representing the interests of people aged between 12 and 25 years of age and those who work with them. The Youth Coalition works to actively promote the well being and aspirations of young people in the ACT with particular respect to their political, cultural, economic and social development. The Youth Coalition is represented on many ACT advisory structures and provides advice to the ACT Government on a range of issues related to young people and youth services.

Analysis of the *ACT Budget 2018-19*
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June 2018

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The Youth Coalition acknowledges the ongoing support and input of the ACT Peaks Network, in particular our partnership work with Families ACT, Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Association ACT, Mental Health Community Coalition ACT, ACT Shelter, The Women's Centre for Health Matters, and the ACT Council of Social Services.

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Introduction and General Comments

Young people aged 12-15 years not only represent a significant proportion of the ACT population but also the emerging future and possibilities for Canberra and Territory. Youth is a life phase that exemplifies opportunities for transformation, growth and new and exciting futures. However, this phase offers complex challenges and marks a period of vulnerability for young people as they navigate inequalities and disadvantages that manifest across generations. As the representative body for young people, youth workers and their interests, the Youth Coalition believes that the 2018-19 ACT Budget does little to address the most prominent issues that they face.

The Youth Coalition commends the provision of new mental health services which will support the community and supplement existing services that are struggling to access adequate mental health supports in a timely manner. We also welcome funding for the Assertive Outreach Program, a youth focused Project Officer, and continuation for funding for headspace.

The Youth Coalition supports the significant investment in education infrastructure as well as funding for the Future of Education program. We will continue our advocacy for a Strategy which includes a fully resourced focus on early intervention and prevention, a focus on identifying the needs of individual students, and resourcing for the development of strong collaborative partnerships between families, schools and community service organisations.

The Youth Coalition acknowledges the funding of additional school psychologists, and a dedicated Parental Engagement Officer. However, providing supports outside of the domain of education is imperative to engage at risk young people and their families, and to provide the necessary supports that address the social determinants of education.

The Youth Coalition welcomes the much-needed delivery of homelessness services for women and children and welcomes the extended hours of OneLink and investment in Common Ground at Dickson. However, this budget does nothing to directly address youth homelessness in the ACT. The ACT continues to do very little to prevent young people from becoming homeless, with no clear strategy for prevention and early intervention.

Housing affordability and security continues to be an area of profound concern for many young people. The Youth Coalition is disappointed by the lack of action taken address the ongoing housing affordability crisis in the ACT. The lack of secure and affordable housing impacts not only low income families, but threatens all young people who are transitioning into independence.

Youth unemployment and underemployment continue to adversely impact the mental health and wellbeing of young people in the ACT, undermining their basic securities and making it difficult for them to build their lives. The Youth Coalition is pleased to see funding committed to the establishment of the Young Workers Advice Service. However, we are concerned by the lack of investment in specific initiatives to reduce the unemployment gap between the demographics, and address the growing impact of underemployment.

The Youth Coalition maintains that Canberra can be a city where young Australians thrive. While the ACT Budget highlighted growth and prosperity as big achievements, the Youth Coalition does not see this reflected in experiences of young people in the ACT. Young people are not incidentally reaping the benefits of the picture of growth offered by the Budget. We are looking to our political leaders to stand up for all Canberrans. We would like to see Canberra lead the country in how we care for, support, and provide opportunities for all of our citizens.

Key Priorities for Young People & Youth Sector

Key priority areas identified in the Youth Coalition’s submission to the 2018-19 ACT Budget were:

1. Education
2. Mental Health
3. Employment
4. Housing and Homelessness
5. Supports for Children, Young People, and Families

Recommendations

The Youth Coalition submitted recommendations to the 2018-19 ACT Budget urging the ACT Government to affect meaningful change by allocating expenditure to early intervention and prevention services and addressing the social determinants of health.

The Youth Coalition’s full submission to the 2018-19 ACT Budget is available online:

<http://youthcoalition.net/ACTbudget2018-19.pdf>

Our key recommendations are outlined below with an indication of whether they were reflected in the 2018-19 ACT Budget.

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| Increase investment in strategies and services that address social determinants of health. | Partially Met |
| Increase investment in early intervention and prevention services. | Partially Met |
| <p>Approaches to early intervention and prevention that are informed by the social determinants of health invite us to reconsider how we respond to social issues that affect our community across a range of spheres. For example, the prevention of youth homelessness is a whole of government responsibility requiring collaboration across the economic policy levers that create jobs, ensure adequate income when people are not in paid work, provide affordable housing and enable access to a range of social supports, including services that help people to access jobs. We believe that there is still an overall lack of investment and co-ordination to strengthen our community capacity to do early intervention and prevention work.</p> <p>The Youth Coalition will continue to advocate for the ACT Government to prioritise early intervention and prevention as a guiding principle when making budgetary decisions.</p> | |

Education

As a result of the diversity within Canberra's suburbs, most ACT schools have small numbers of highly disadvantaged students, rather than disadvantage being concentrated to a few schools. Over the past four years, much of the Youth Coalition's advocacy work has focussed on reducing education inequity having led a campaign with the ACT Council of Social Services which highlights its issues and challenges in the ACT.

The Youth Coalition acknowledges the significant investment in school infrastructure in the 2018-19 ACT Budget, particularly, the designation of funds for a Year 7 - 10 campus to follow the development of a new primary school in the Molonglo Valley. Additional places for schools in Gungahlin, as well as planning for increased school capacity across Canberra will help to ensure all children and young people have access to education in their local area.

The Youth Coalition is pleased to see the \$9.18 million allocation for the Future of Education program and acknowledge that the conversation is ongoing. Along with ACTCOSS, we will continue to advocate for a Future of Education Strategy which includes a fully resourced focus on early intervention and prevention, a focus on identifying the needs of individual students, and resourcing for the development of strong collaborative partnerships between families, schools and community service organisations.

The Youth Coalitions acknowledges the investment of \$7.32 million for an additional fifteen school psychologists, and \$600,000 for a dedicated Parental Engagement Officer. However, we are concerned that access to these student resources will be restricted to within the school term and only to those people with a fractured relationship with education system. Many young people and families who have disengaged from education or need psychosocial support do not feel that schools are safe places for them to seek support. It is imperative to ensure those who most require support face as few barriers as possible, which may suggest a need to evolve the way that people such as psychologists and parental engagement officers are employed.

One of the recommendations from our recent submission to the Future of Education Conversation was to increase resourcing for community service organisations to be able to work collaboratively with schools. Young people who are at risk of disengaging from school need support to address the underlying risk factors that may be impacting upon them and their families. Community service organisations are best placed to provide these supports as they are able to address a range of needs, and are not constrained by school hours. Furthermore, many young people and families who struggle to engage with education have become distrusting of both the education system and government organisations more broadly. Community services provide an alternative avenue of support to rebuild fractured relationships with education and foster community connectedness and belonging. Providing external support is important to both young people and their families as it can address the social determinants of education. Currently, ACT community organisations are receiving an increased number of requests from schools to provide services to their students, however a lack of financial resources means these organisations do not have sufficient staffing to meet this demand.

Young people have identified that access to public spaces and recreational activities are important to them feeling valued by their community. Schools are an important part of our communities, and with limited community facilities available in many areas, the Youth Coalition requests that school facilities being made available to community groups and young people outside of school operating hours, and beyond school-organised community activities.

Recommendations

The Youth Coalition submission to the 2018-19 ACT Budget called on the ACT Government to improve educational attainment and inequity for vulnerable students in the ACT by responding to a number of recommendations. Our recommendations are outlined below with an indication of whether they were reflected in the 2018-19 ACT Budget.

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| Invest in community services to increase their capacity to respond to and partner with schools, so they are able to work collaboratively with the Education Directorate to address educational inequity. | Not met |
| While we welcome the initiatives to provide support to young people within the education system, we are disappointed that there is no matched investment in community based services. We will continue to advocate for funding to ensure community service organisations are resourced to partner and work collaboratively with schools to address the barriers that students and families face outside of school which impact on education outcomes. | |
| Invest in targeted supports to children and young people, particularly those aged 8-12, providing early intervention and support services, and supporting them to successfully transition from primary to high school. | Not met |
| We are disappointed there has not been a targeted investment for children and young people in the middle years. We will continue to advocate for new policy and funded programs which will address the needs of this cohort of young people and their families. | |

2018-19 ACT Budget Initiatives

Key initiatives in the 2017-18 ACT Budget relating to education include:

- Future of Education - \$19.2m over 4 years - The Future of Education strategy will inform the next 10 years of education in the ACT.
- Future Skills Academy - \$5.8m over 4 years - The Government will establish a Future Skills Academy based around two hubs, UC Lake Ginninderra Secondary College and Caroline Chisholm High School, to support Canberra students leaving school ready for future-oriented industry. The academy will be available to all public schools and students.
- More resources for student growth - \$31.1m over 4 years - Funding for the equivalent of an additional 66 full-time learning professionals and support staff.
- Early Childhood Strategy - \$6.7m over 4 years - The Government will develop a comprehensive Early Childhood Strategy to promote equity and quality in the ACT's early childhood education and care sector.
- Needs-based funding for students with disability - \$23.2m over 4 years - Support for students with disability and complex health needs in ACT public schools through needs-based funding. The initiative responds to growth in enrolments and the needs of students with disability.
- Supporting parents to help their kids learn - \$600,000 over 4 years - Employing a dedicated Parental Engagement Officer to work with schools and parent groups to foster positive outcomes for students.
- CIT Campus Modernisation - \$1m over 1 year - Early planning and design for a new teaching and learning complex on the Reid CIT campus.

- Narrabundah College Modernisation - \$750,000 over 2 years - Early planning and design for the renewal and upgrade of Narrabundah College
- Molonglo Primary School - \$53m over 4 years - The Government will construct a new primary school in the Molonglo Valley, taking students from the 2021 school year, and will undertake planning activities for a future 7-10 campus on the adjoining site.
- More places at Gungahlin schools - \$24m over 4 years - Expanding capacity at Amaroo (K-6, 7-10), Gold Creek K-6 and Neville Bonner P-6 for a further 500 students, expanding Franklin Early Childhood School, planning or a new school in Gungahlin.
- Campbell Primary School Modernisation - \$19m over 4 years - Construction of a new central building and refurbishment of the Junior Wing and Library.
- School Roof Replacement Program - \$18m over 4 years - Replacing roofs at six ACT schools, and investigating additional renewable energy generation and introduction of energy storage at public schools.

Mental Health

Mental health is a significant issue for many young people with one in four experiencing a mental health issue in any given year. With approximately 78,000 young people in the ACT, almost 20,000 young Canberrans are likely to experience mental ill health at some point in any given year.

Young people in the ACT consistently report mental health and well-being as a primary concern. In the Youth Coalition's 2016 Rate Canberra Survey, mental health-related issues emerged as an issue within each age bracket (ages 12-15, 16-17, 18-21, 22-25). Additionally, in the survey and consultations held by the Youth Coalition regarding the 2018-19 ACT Budget, 78 percent of respondents declared mental health and well-being as one of the three most important areas that they believe the ACT Government should allocate funds toward in the Budget.

The Youth Coalition commends the Government for delivering a range of initiatives focusing on supporting the spectrum of mental health needs within the community. In particular we welcome the \$2.16 million investment into establishing an Assertive Outreach Program targeted at 12-18 year olds. This initiative aims to target vulnerable young people who struggle to access community based mental health services such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). This initiative will work collaboratively with community services providers and provide advice regarding mental health concerns.

The ACT Budget will also fund a new Project Officer to develop an evidence-based and recovery focused model of care for the integrated mental health services for young adults, and has extended additional funding allocated to headspace for another three years. These supported accommodation options will work to increase essential supports to families and the community and will alleviate some of the stress on the overstretched mental health system.

The 2018-19 ACT Budget includes the introduction or continuation of an number of initiatives which will have a positive impact on the mental health supports and services which are available to Canberrans. This includes funding to build more residential facilities and refurbish the Brian Hennessey facility. Information about these initiatives are listed below. As new programs and services are developed and evaluated, the Youth Coalition will advocate for the mental health system to provide adequate early intervention and prevention, and respond to mental health crisis in a timely manner.

Overall, the Youth Coalition welcomes the significant investment in mental health in the 2018-19 Budget, in particular the focus for young people on early intervention and outreach programs. We believe this provides a good foundation for young Canberrans and their families to have access to support when and where they most require it.

Recommendations

The Youth Coalition submission to the 2018-19 ACT Budget called on the ACT Government to support the mental health and wellbeing of young Canberrans by responding to a number of recommendations. Our recommendations are outlined below with an indication of whether they were reflected in the 2018-19 ACT Budget.

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| Invest in addressing the gap between early intervention and prevention services and crisis response services in the ACT mental health system, including outreach services. | Met |
| <p>The Youth Coalition welcomes the funding of mental health services that encompass early intervention through to acute and complex supports. This investment in mental health care represents the ACT Government's commitment to addressing the mental health needs of the community.</p> | |

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| Reaffirm the commitment made in the 2017-19 ACT Budget to support headspace Canberra, and continue to commit \$400,000 annually to increase their capacity to meet the demand for youth mental health support. | Met |
| <p>The Youth Coalition commends the ACT Government for the commitment to continue investing in headspace. Building off the one year commitment made in the previous 2017-18 budget, this investment will continue to provide additional resources to headspace for another three years.</p> | |

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| Invest in multidisciplinary teams within schools and community-based youth services to increase their capacity to deliver more integrated, efficient and effective mental health support to young people, both inside and outside of school hours and school terms. | Partially Met |
| <p>While the Youth Coalition commends the ACT Government for its commitment to mental health initiatives we continue to see a gap in adequate provision of support within education system to address emerging needs of children and young people.</p> <p>We welcome the additional 15 school psychologists who will work in ACT public schools, however we will continue to advocate for this funding to be allocated to psychologists who can be employed by community service organisations rather than within the Education Directorate, and work within both school and community settings. This would ensure they were available to students outside of school hours, outside of school facilities, or who are temporarily disengaged from school. The Youth Coalition will continue to advocate for increased investment in multidisciplinary support teams who can work in both schools and community services, providing support outside of a school environment and outside of school hours.</p> | |

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| Invest in community development projects and programs that increase family and community capacity, knowledge about, and confidence in, supporting the mental health and well-being of young people. | Partially met |
| <p>The Youth Coalition welcomes the ACT Government's commitment to provide ongoing support to Self Help Organisations United Together (SHOUT), and the ACT Mental Health Recovery College Trial. Further to these investments the Youth Coalition will continue to advocate to increase community capacity and confidence in supporting young people.</p> | |

2018-19 ACT Budget Initiatives

Key initiatives in the 2018-19 ACT Budget relating to mental health include:

- headspace Canberra - \$1.3m over 3 years - Additional funding for headspace to be provided over a further three years.
- More school psychologists - \$7.4m over 4 years - The Government will add fifteen full-time psychologists by 2020 to support wellbeing and mental health outcomes for students, parents and carers within schools and the community.
- ACT Mental Health Recovery College Trial - \$889,000 over 4 years - Provide non-clinical mental health training courses that support early intervention, helping to facilitate experience-based learning and peer support.
- More mental health accommodation - \$21.7m over 4 years - The Government will establish three 24-hour, community-based, mental health accommodation facilities, establish a Step-Up-Step-Down facility for people discharged from hospital, and refurbish the Unit at the Brian Hennessy Rehabilitation Centre to help people transition back into the community.
- More mental health outreach for young Canberrans - \$2.2m over 2 years - The Government will establish a recovery-focused, community-based outreach program for young Canberrans aged 12-18 years and a young adult model of care for people aged 18 to 25 years.
- Stronger support for suicide prevention - \$350,000 over 1 year - The Government will invest in attempted suicide after care services by extending the trial of the Way Back Support Service.
- More support for families and inclusion - Supporting SHOUT - \$469,000 over 4 years - The Government will provide support to Self Help Organisations United Together (SHOUT) to assist and build capacity for self-help groups in the ACT community.

Employment

Secure employment forms the bedrock upon which transitions to adulthood are built. However, youth unemployment and underemployment continue to undermine basic securities and ability for young people to build their lives. Employment security impacts virtually all aspects of young people's lives.

While there has been a slight improvement, youth unemployment remains high in the ACT, almost 2.5 times the overall unemployment rate. In April 2018, youth unemployment was at 9.3% compared to 4% for the general ACT population. Unemployment figures also hide a larger problem as they do not adequately capture youth underemployment – those seeking to work more hours. Compared to other age groups, young people in the workforce are more likely to be employed in part-time or casual jobs, resulting in underemployment. The Youth Coalition's 2016 *Rate Canberra* survey revealed that 21% of young people were looking for work and 46% were seeking to increase employment hours. The findings were particularly concerning for those aged 18-21, with 27% of respondents in this age group looking for work and 61% wanting to increase the number of hours they currently work.

Employment is also seen as a protective factor for social inclusion, better health, and improved self esteem. Unemployment has a significant impact on individuals and has been linked with poor health outcomes. Unemployment and underemployment also impact the broader community, through reducing the tax base and increasing the economic burden on the community. Reducing these impacts is not just the job of the ACT Government, or young people, but needs the support of the business and community sectors. The Youth Coalition would like to see Canberra develop a reputation as a city that is not only a great place to visit or complete higher education studies, but a great place for young people to work and live.

Studies indicate that obtaining full-time work is currently harder than it has been in recent history. While this is concerning for all demographics, the increased competition for full-time roles is particularly problematic for young job seekers seeking to enter the workforce with minimal prior employment history. The lack of tangible supports for young job seekers will delay or prevent their entrance into the full-time workforce altogether, contributing to the increased underemployment and casualisation of labour. This is detrimental to the territory's economy as a whole and to the prosperity and wellbeing of future Canberrans.

We recognise the commitment that the ACT Government has made to improving the delivery of and access to education; however, without viable opportunities for employment upon the completion of studies, the ability to capitalise on high school and/or tertiary education is diminished. With the government returning to surplus in 2018-19 and looking to invest for the future, the Youth Coalition is concerned by the lack of investment in specific initiatives to reduce the unemployment gap between the demographics, and address the growing impact of underemployment. This is a particularly important issue considering the increased prevalence of young people in insecure housing due to high accommodation costs and the Federal Government's decision not increase the Newstart Allowance.

Educating young people through the Australian Curriculum, as well information provision for international students, regarding workplace safety and workplace rights were key recommendations from the recent *Inquiry into the Extent, nature and Consequence of Insecure Work in the ACT* that will impact on young people. The Youth Coalition is pleased to see funding committed over the next four years for the establishment of the Young Workers Advice Service. This initiative will develop an independent, single trusted source of information for young people and their representatives related to workers compensation, work health and safety, and other workplace and employment related issues.

Recommendations

The Youth Coalition submission to the 2018-19 ACT Budget called on the ACT Government to respond to a number of recommendations related job creation and employment pathways for young people in the ACT. The recommendations are outlined below with an indication of whether they were reflected in the 2017-18 ACT Budget.

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| Develop an accreditation program for employers of young people, which recognises and promotes businesses which demonstrate 'best practice' in employing young people. | Not met |
| Seek opportunities to respond to the changing nature of entry into work, such as flexible programs that provide meaningful work experience, and prepare young people for work in today's world. | Not met |
| Implement & report on targets for all ACT Government funded projects that anticipate creating jobs, to employ people in our community who are most vulnerable to unemployment, including young people. | Not met |
| Invest in a pilot program offering a period of guaranteed employment in ACT Government to young people who are transitioning from Care. | Not met |
| As outlined above, unemployment and underemployment is a significant issue for many young people in the ACT. While we are in a period of economic growth and a balanced budget, the Youth Coalition believes this is a time to be innovative in the ways we address the barriers that many young people face in gaining employment. We will continue to advocate for programs which will address the increasing insecurity of work faced by many young people. | |

2018-19 ACT Budget Initiatives:

Key initiatives in 2018-19 ACT Budget relating to jobs creation and employment pathways for young people include:

- Young Workers Advice Service - \$470,000 over 4 years - The Government will establish an advice service to provide young and vulnerable workers with information regarding their rights and protections at work.
- ACT Public Service Inclusion Employment Program - \$776,000 over 2 years - Expansion of whole of government inclusion employment programs and initiatives to support, develop and retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and LGBTIQ people as well as people with disability within the ACT Public Service. (\$776k over 2 years)
- Vocational training for stage and theatre - \$145,000 over 2 years - Increased training opportunities within Canberra's stage and theatre industry by providing for a trained educator at the Canberra Theatre Centre for a Certificate III in Live Production and Services.
- Secure Local Jobs Code enforcement - \$3.4m over 4 years - Implementation of the Secure Local Jobs for Local Workers reform package.

Housing and Homelessness

Addressing youth homelessness and improving the supply of affordable housing are key policy focus areas for the Youth Coalition. Housing is a fundamental determinant of health, well-being, social connection, and workforce participation. Secure and safe housing is the foundation for a decent life. While young people seek to access the benefits that Canberra offers, many face challenges in securing adequate accommodation. This insecurity not only undermines their capacity to thrive, but, in many cases adds significant risks and vulnerability. The Youth Coalition continues to push for the need for more affordable housing in this city and investment in services that address youth homelessness.

We recognise the attention being given to housing affordability and access through the ongoing work of Housing ACT, including the recent consultation process and housing summit. The Youth Coalition is committed to continuing to join with the community sector to speak with unity on this issue, and call on the government to commit not just attention, but also adequate resources, to address housing affordability. We need initiatives that will increase the growth of housing supply that meet the needs for those with lowest incomes including students and young people. The Youth Coalition calls for growth in public housing stock in line with population growth as well as other housing options for low income renters not eligible for public housing. The chronic lack of affordable housing options for people on low incomes puts strain on families and young people, increasing the risk of homelessness. However, secure and affordable housing is now impacting not just low income families, but threatens all young people who are transitioning into independence.

The Youth Coalition welcomes the support for the homelessness sector through the funding for shelters, extended hours of OneLink and investment in Common Ground at Dickson. Yet this budget does nothing to directly address youth homelessness in the ACT. For many young people, simply providing a place to live is insufficient to addressing the causes of homelessness, and does not always end the potential pathways to homelessness in later life. The ACT not only lacks a clear approach to early intervention into youth homelessness but has inadequate supports for those already experiencing homelessness. The Youth Coalition maintains that definitive and explicit approaches to preventing youth homelessness are needed in the ACT. These approaches have the benefit of not only reducing youth homelessness but improving educational engagement and reducing family conflict through family focused youth work practice.

While the Youth Coalition welcomes the investment in homelessness and allied sectors, including the ongoing commitment to domestic and family violence, the Youth Coalitions sees no attention to addressing the harms of youth homelessness nor taking action to prevent this social issue.

Recommendations

The Youth Coalition submission to the 2018-19 ACT Budget called on the ACT Government to respond to a number of recommendations related to housing and homelessness that were jointly developed by the community sector under the leadership of ACTCOSS. The recommendations are outlined below with an indication of whether they were reflected in the 2018-19 ACT Budget.

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| Invest in responding to the gap in services for young people aged 12 - 15 who are experiencing homelessness. | Not met |
| <p>The Youth Coalition acknowledges that there is currently research being undertaken by CSD and the Institute of Child Protection Studies in response to the homelessness sector raising concerns regarding homeless 12-15 year olds. However, the homelessness sector has highlighted this issue for a decade. There continues to be no services to address the needs of this cohort. Not only are there no crisis services to attend to the needs of young people experiencing homelessness under 15 years of age, but this is a missed opportunity to prevent youth homelessness.</p> | |
| Every ACT Government Directorate contribute at least one percent of their operating budget to fund additional measures that increase provision of services to reduce homelessness and increase supply of accessible, affordable housing. | Not met |
| The ACT Government divert \$100 million from its investment portfolio in bonds to create an investment fund for community housing providers for the purpose of building new accessible, affordable rental housing. The fund would be held in perpetuity and repaid at government bond rates. | Not met |

2018-19 ACT Budget Initiatives

Key initiatives in 2018-19 ACT Budget relating to youth housing and homelessness include:

- Planning for Common Ground at Dickson - \$250,000 over 1 year - The Government will undertake design work for a second Common Ground accommodation complex in Dickson.
- More frontline domestic violence and rape crisis services - \$1.7m over 4 years - Additional support to the Canberra Rape Crisis Centre and Domestic Violence Crisis Service to enable these organisations to respond to increased demand from Canberrans seeking support.
- Innovation in housing choices - \$775,000 over 3 years - The Government will continue to engage with the community and industry stakeholders on the development of housing products, as well as preparing sites for the delivery of demonstration housing projects.
- Innovation to boost affordable housing - \$500,000 over 1 year - The Government will invest in projects aimed at increasing the supply of affordable rental properties available for families escaping domestic violence and specialist disability accommodation.
- Parkwood estate rehabilitation - \$5m over 2 years - Rehabilitation works at the Parkwood Road Recycling Estate to support the continued development of more housing in the Ginninderry estate.
- Improved energy efficiency for public housing - \$5.7m over 2 years - Energy efficient upgrades to public housing properties to help tenants reduce their power bills, use energy more efficiently and cut greenhouse gas emissions.

Supports for Children, Young People, & Families

The Youth Coalition submission to the 2018-19 ACT Budget called on the ACT Government to respond to a number of recommendations related to children, young people and families. The recommendations are outlined below with an indication of whether they were reflected in the 2018-19 ACT Budget.

Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation

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| Invest in a purpose-built building for Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation | Partially met |
| <p>The Youth Coalition notes the \$150,000 funding allocation for identifying suitable accommodation options for Gugan Gulwan. We hope to see this funding and process adequately addresses the needs identified by Gugan Gulwan and the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community. We will continue to advocate for full funding for the development of this future facility in the 2019-20 budget process.</p> | |

Young Carers

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| Adopt a long term commitment to an ACT Carers Strategy, ensuring the implementation of this strategy is advised and monitored by carer representatives, including young people. | Met outside of ACT Budget process |
| <p>The Youth Coalition welcomed the ACT Government's commitment to the ACT Carers Strategy which was announced and funded prior to the 2018-19 ACT Budget.</p> | |

Youth Week

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| Invest in a week long program that celebrates young people's contribution to the Canberra community, to meet the gap that will be left by withdrawal of Australian Government funding to National Youth Week activities. | Met |
| <p>The Youth Coalition understands that \$25 000 will be allocated to a Youth Week celebration through existing resources in the Community Services Directorate. While this does not fully replace the previous Australian Government funding, we acknowledge the commitment of the Minister & Community Services Directorate to continue to celebrate Youth Week in the ACT. This is an important event for young people and the youth sector, and we will continue to advocate for collaboration between the ACT Government and the Youth Sector in the planning and implementation of Youth Week in the ACT.</p> | |

Access to the Translating and Interpreting Service for Culturally & Linguistically Diverse Young People

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| Education Directorate develop a specific centralised funding pool for schools to access the TIS, so all schools with students or parents who speak limited or no english can access the service. | Not Met |
| Expand funding for access to the Translation and Interpreting Service (TIS) so that all not-for-profit services working with people experiencing disadvantage that require TIS can access the service. | Partially Met |
| <p>We note that the Safer Families initiative has streamlined processes for community sector agencies to access the Translation and Interpreting Service, which has led to increased support for people seeking legal assistance for domestic and family violence. We will continue to advocate for all community service organisations to have adequate funding to access TIS. The Youth Coalition is concerned that young people in schools are often required to translate for parents and siblings, as there is no specific policy or funding pool which would ensure all schools and families are able to access TIS.</p> | |

Increased Role and Scope for the Child, Youth & Family Services Program

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| Increased investment in the Child, Youth and Family Services Program | Not met |
| <p>We continue to advocate for additional investment in community services to increase their capacity to work in partnership with government to support the most vulnerable members of our community. Community service organisations have the skills, expertise and already established relationships to provide support to children, young people, and families. With the increase in infrastructure and the ongoing development of the ACT, this growth needs to be matched by an increase in funding to support the needs of the children, young people and families.</p> | |

Developing a Fit for Purpose Procurement Framework

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| Develop a fit for purpose service procurement framework that includes processes that engage directly with the community to ensure services meet expectations, improve quality, continuity, diversity and sustainability of both the service offer and the workforce. The procurement framework should ensure funder accountability to the community entitled to and/or accessing the service and drive ongoing improvement of procurement processes and outcomes from the perspective of service users. | Met outside of ACT Budget process. |
| <p>The Youth Coalition welcomes the work already being undertaken by the ACT Government. It is our understanding that this work will include addressing the request for a fit for purpose procurement framework for the community sector through the Early Intervention by Design process.</p> | |

2018-19 ACT Budget Initiatives

A range of initiatives that in the 2018-19 ACT Budget relating to supports for children, young people and families include:

- Establishing the Chief Minister's Charitable Fund - \$5m over 1 year - The Government will establish the Chief Minister's Charitable Fund to provide additional support for Canberrans most in need.
- Expanding CBR NightCrew - \$1.7m over 4 years - The Government will expand the CBR NightCrew service for a further four years. The funding will also support dedicated CBR NightCrew staff to promote engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Canberrans.
- Making Canberra a more LGBTIQ friendly city - \$700,000 over 4 years - The Government will support the Office for LGBTIQ Affairs through grants programs and increasing the office's focus on the mental health and wellbeing of intersex, transgender and gender diverse Canberrans.
- Adoption and permanency - \$3.5m over 4 years - Dedicated resources within Child and Youth Protection, and more resources to the Justice and Community Safety Directorate, for legal services to improve the adoption and permanency process for vulnerable children in the ACT.
- Building connections for early intervention and prevention - \$2.7m over 4 years - Expanding the scope of the new Child and Youth Protection Services client management system to integrate with key stakeholders.
- Child and Youth Protection Quality Assurance and Improvement Committee - \$345,000 over 2 years - Strengthen child protection policy and practice in the ACT to ensure better outcomes for at risk children
- Delivering the Family Safety Hub - \$6m over 4 years - Deliver holistic support to victims of domestic and family violence. The Hub will enable the piloting and refining of innovative approaches to enhancing safety.
- Family Group Conferencing - \$1.5m over 4 years - The Government will deliver family conferencing services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families at risk of ongoing involvement with the child protection system.
- Flexible public transport - \$1.1m over 1 year - The Government will continue to operate a flexible transport service to meet the needs of passengers who currently have difficulty using fixed route public transport services.
- City Renewal Precinct activation projects - \$28m over 4 years - The Government will fund the City Renewal Authority to undertake public realm upgrades and city activation programs, commence planning for future precinct revitalisation works and public realm upgrade projects, and to deliver its Place-making Program.
- Listening to Canberrans - \$5.5m over 4 years - The Government will strengthen the Canberra community's involvement in Government decision-making processes through ongoing funding for an online panel and more community engagement activities. (\$5,066,000 over 4 years)
- Implementing the Commonwealth Redress Scheme for Institutional Child and Sexual Abuse - \$14.1m over 4 years - The ACT Government will contribute to the Commonwealth Redress Scheme, which will provide support to survivors of abuse in Government institutions through a redress payment, counselling and psychological care, and a direct personal response.
- Strengthening the Reportable Conduct Scheme - \$1.1m over 2 years - Resourcing the ACT Ombudsman to undertake additional investigations, and to support the introduction of religious institutions in the Scheme.

- Delivering the ACT Women's Plan 2016-26 - \$696,000 over 4 years - The Government will deliver key actions under the ACT Women's Plan 2016-26 to support increased representation from a range of diverse backgrounds on boards and committees. This will be delivered through ongoing management and promotion of the ACT Diversity Register, and delivery of board traineeship programs.
- NDIS Transition Integrated Service Response - \$1.8m over 2 years - The Government will establish an Integrated Service Response program to provide emergency funding for people with high / complex support needs not met by the NDIS, and will provide additional funding for individual advocacy services.
- Disability Justice Strategy - \$580,000 over 4 years - The Government will develop a Disability Justice Strategy to recognise and respond to the disadvantage that people with disability face when dealing with the justice system, and will provide ongoing support for Canberra Community Law's Socio-Legal Practice Clinic.
- Growing the Disability Inclusion Grants Program - \$200,000 over 4 years - The Government will expand the Disability Inclusion Grants program to support community groups, organisations and small businesses to become more inclusive and accessible for people with disabilities.
- Growing the Reconciliation Day Public Holiday - \$800,000 over 4 years - The Government will provide ongoing support for Reconciliation Day, including an annual support for events and activities that engage the ACT community to promote reconciliation and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.
- Expanding Hospital in the Home - \$34.5m over 4 years - The Government will expand the capacity of the Hospital in the Home service so that around 3,000 more patients per year can be cared for in their own homes and through community health centres.
- New facility for Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health Service - \$11.3m over 4 years - The Government will construct a new centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through staged payments to Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health Service.
- Drug and Alcohol Court - \$500,000 over 1 year - The Government will work to establish an ACT Drug and Alcohol Court with a holistic model that considers the complex interactions between health and restorative justice.
- Canberra as a Restorative City - \$187,000 over 1 year - The Government will provide funding from the Confiscated Assets Trust to develop Canberra as a Restorative City, building a stronger and more connected society.
- Reducing recidivism - \$1m over 1 year - The Government will expand the High Density Housing Community and Safety Program, which facilitates programs that reduce crime and antisocial behaviour. It will also deliver a dedicated Liaison Officer through Victim Support ACT to better support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander victims of crime, and establish Warrumbul Court in the Children's Court to provide a culturally appropriate sentencing process.
- Weston Creek Walk In Centre - \$2m over 1 year - The Government will continue to plan for Canberra's fourth Walk in Centre in the Weston Creek region.



MEDIA RELEASE: ACT Budget 2018-19

6 June 2018

Welcome investment into mental health services, but nothing to address housing insecurity and youth homelessness

The Youth Coalition of the ACT welcomes the 2018-19 ACT Budget and its investment in mental health support, assertive outreach and improving public and community spaces, but maintains that there are parts of the community that have been overlooked in this Budget.

Dr Justin Barker, the Executive Director of the Youth Coalition of the ACT, congratulated the Treasurer on delivering a balanced Budget, but said more needed to be done to ensure Canberra's young people also benefited from the Territory's strong economic performance.

"The Youth Coalition of the ACT has been calling for funding for mental health initiatives focusing on early intervention for young people for many years, and we are very pleased to see it included in this Budget," Dr Barker said. "The investment in the Assertive Outreach Service for 12-18 year olds is a clear recognition of the need to improve access to mental health supports for vulnerable young Canberrans. Alongside the other significant investments in mental health including ongoing funding for headspace, we hope these measures will ease the pressure on mental health services in the ACT."

Unfortunately the jobs growth and a strong local economy highlighted by the Treasurer in his Budget speech are not reflected in the experiences of many young people in the ACT.

"We're concerned that we didn't see anything in this Budget for early intervention and prevention into the root causes of social disadvantage and vulnerability. This budget does not deliver on addressing insecure housing and employment for young Canberrans, which undermines their stability and ability to invest in their futures. We have seen yet another example this week in the media of young people unable to find accommodation in Canberra. Young people in our city should not have to sleep in libraries, cars, or couchsurf because they are unable to find accommodation in Canberra."

The Youth Coalition commends the much-needed investment in homelessness services for women and children, but wants to know where the funds are for addressing youth homelessness.

"We need to invest in services and initiatives that will address the risks and vulnerabilities that cause homelessness in the first place," Dr Barker said. "It is not acceptable to see this huge gap between those who thrive in this prosperous city, and the young people who don't have a safe place to live."

For further comment please contact Dr Justin Barker on 02 6247 3540