



ACT
Government

Australian
Capital Territory
BUDGET
2017-18

For a better Canberra



Social Inclusion Statement



“To the gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans and intersex kids at school discovering who they are; to members of our local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities; to refugees finding a haven from trouble overseas; to the families and older people living in our public housing throughout Canberra; and to those looking for a way back from the justice system, we say: you are part of our community. You belong here.

But we don't just say it. We are backing that attitude with new investment to deliver better support when it matters.”

ACT CHIEF MINISTER ANDREW BARR, 2017 BUDGET SPEECH

AN INCLUSIVE CITY FOR ALL CANBERRANS

The ACT Government is committed to building an inclusive and welcoming city for all Canberrans. The 2017-18 Budget delivers a range of initiatives to advance this goal, including more and better mental health services, support for multicultural communities and stronger homelessness services. Through this Budget, the Government is continuing to ensure diversity and difference are celebrated and supported instead of becoming obstacles to full participation in our community.

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CANBERRANS

The Government recognises the important role that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and culturally-specific services play in delivering positive outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Canberrans.

The Government is supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families and communities with a range of targeted services in health, early childhood development and parenting, including:

- > **\$12 million** for a new health facility for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Canberrans. Delivered in partnership with Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health Service, the facility will deliver culturally appropriate, safe and holistic healthcare.

- > **\$502,000** in 2017-18 to continue the Growing Healthy Families program, which delivers culturally specific and informed services in the areas of health, early childhood development and parenting.
- > **\$100,000** over four years in seed funding grants for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander controlled organisations, to stimulate development of more culturally appropriate services and options from within the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.
- > Partnering with Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health Service to deliver the Yarrabi Bamirr justice reinvestment trial, a culturally aware and family centred justice reinvestment program.



CHILDREN AND YOUNG CANBERRANS

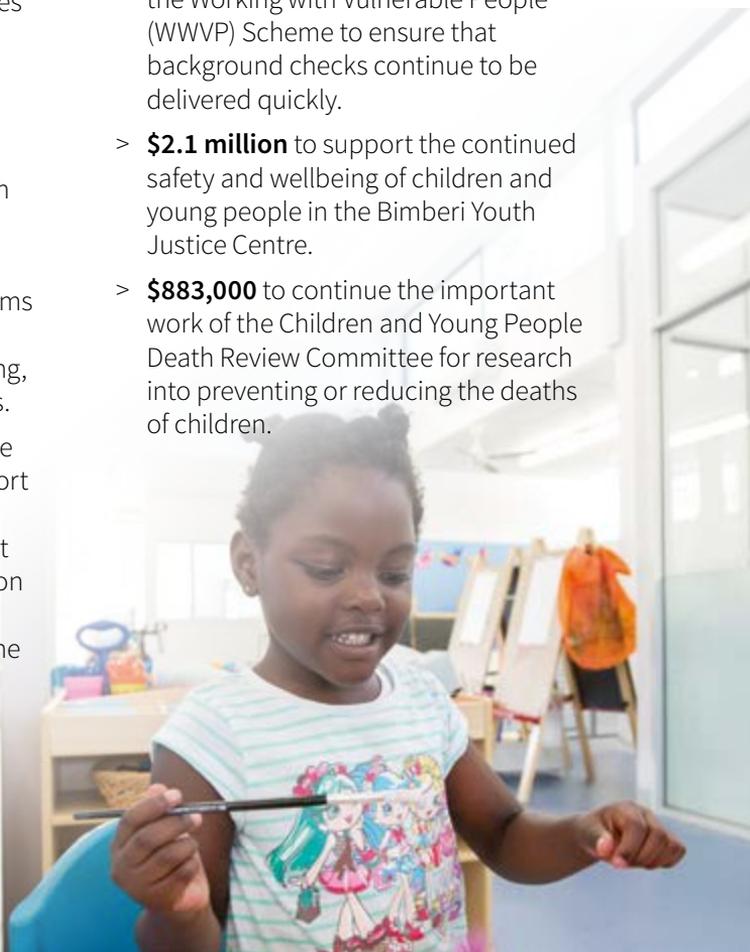
The ACT Government has a strong commitment to promoting and protecting the fundamental rights of children and young people. All children and young people should have the opportunity to reach their potential, make a contribution in their communities, participate in decision making and share the benefits of our prosperity.

The Government already invests more than **\$1.2 billion** in education for children and young people through local schools and the delivery of vocational education and training, as well as over **\$128 million** on child development and youth protection services.

The 2017-18 Budget will build on that investment and achieve better outcomes for children and young Canberrans by delivering:

- > **\$2.4 million** to employ more school psychologists to protect student wellbeing and improve mental health outcomes for local teens.
- > Over **\$100 million** to renew and expand government school classrooms and facilities, including works to increase access to schools by sporting, multicultural and community groups.
- > A **\$7.1 million** mental health package to deliver better mental health support for vulnerable Canberrans including an expansion of child and adolescent mental health consultation and liaison services at the Canberra Hospital to seven days a week and supporting the headspace program to continue.

- > Establishing a Family Safety Hub to better link existing support services in the ACT to ensure Canberrans receive seamless and integrated support when it matters most.
- > **\$631,000** to increase the capacity of the Public Advocate's Office to better protect and support children and young people by advocating for their rights, and monitoring and investigating concerns about the provision of services for their protection.
- > **\$33.7 million** to support children and young people who cannot live in their family homes.
- > **\$10.1 million** for Child and Youth Protection Services to add two more frontline assessment teams.
- > A **\$1.6 million** funding boost for the Working with Vulnerable People (WWVP) Scheme to ensure that background checks continue to be delivered quickly.
- > **\$2.1 million** to support the continued safety and wellbeing of children and young people in the Bimberi Youth Justice Centre.
- > **\$883,000** to continue the important work of the Children and Young People Death Review Committee for research into preventing or reducing the deaths of children.





LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER, INTERSEX AND QUEER CANBERRANS

The ACT Government is committed to Canberra being the most welcoming city in Australia for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ) people.

We deliver on this commitment by providing practical support and services to LGBTIQ Canberrans, as well as initiatives to increase the visibility of these communities. New initiatives that will support this in 2017-18 include:

- > **\$1.4 million** to resource the Office for LGBTIQ Affairs to deliver practical reforms, events and programs to further establish Canberra as the most LGBTIQ-friendly city in Australia.
- > **\$500,000** over three years in new funding to support 'A Gender Agenda' – a community organisation that improves the intersex, transgender and gender diverse community's access to services and participation in the broader Canberra community.
- > Continued funding for the Safe Schools program, to support all ACT schools to provide an open and welcoming community for same sex attracted, intersex and gender diverse students, school staff and families and reduce homophobic and transphobic behaviour and intersex prejudice in all ACT schools.

CANBERRANS WITH A DISABILITY

The ACT Government recognises that our community is stronger when every Canberran can contribute to their full capacity. That is why we continue to invest in services and initiatives that tackle barriers to participation and deliver better support when it matters.

The Government provides nearly **\$200 million** each year to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) for ongoing disability programs and services. The 2017 Budget will build on this investment with new initiatives including:

- > **\$2.2 million** to strengthen the Office for Disability, to have oversight of disability issues in the ACT, including implementation of the NDIS.
- > **\$1.8 million** to establish the ACT Senior Practitioner to provide oversight of the use of restrictive practices, maximising vulnerable Canberrans' quality of life, promoting their development and safeguarding their rights.

- > **\$200,000** in funding for disability access grants that deliver training, increase awareness, and provide infrastructure modifications to increase opportunities for Canberrans with a disability to participate in community and voluntary groups.
- > **\$4.6 million** to provide transport for ACT public school students with a disability.
- > **\$3 million** to further support students with disability to continue to have equitable access and participation in ACT public schools.
- > Developing a Disability Justice Strategy to ensure that people with disability are treated equally before the law and in the justice system.

In recognition of the valuable contribution carers make to the community, the Government will also provide administrative and financial support to Carers ACT to develop and implement an ACT Carers' Strategy. The ACT Carer's Strategy will help guide policy development and delivery of Government and community-led programs and activities.



CANBERRANS FACING DISADVANTAGE

Supporting Canberrans who are dealing with disadvantage remains one of the Government's most important priorities because every Canberran should be able to receive support when they need it.

The Government delivers a range of ongoing support and services for Canberrans facing disadvantage including expenditure of: **\$203 million** a year for social housing services; **\$187 million** a year on mental health, justice health and alcohol and drug programs; **\$197 million** on rehabilitation, aged and community care health services; **\$25 million** on community participation programs; **\$15 million** to fund Legal Aid services; and a wide range of concessions programs.

This Budget continues to expand the range of services and supports available to help people back onto their feet, including:

- > **\$1 million** to strengthen specialist homelessness services and deliver specialised housing support services to vulnerable Canberrans.
- > **\$6.3 million** in additional support for homelessness services under the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement.
- > **\$1.1 million** to support better access to GP care through new or expanded bulk billing services in Tuggeranong and the Molonglo Valley.
- > **\$3.2 million** to purchase and operate two mobile dental clinics to serve hard-to-reach communities and schools.
- > **\$402,000** to design and scope a Drug and Alcohol Court for the ACT.
- > **\$2.5 million** to continue investment in Canberra Community Law, the Women's Legal Centre and the Street Law early intervention legal outreach service to deliver free and accessible legal services to vulnerable Canberrans.
- > **\$5.3 million** for the Extended Throughcare program to improve outcomes when offenders transition back into the community and help reduce rates of recidivism.
- > **\$160,000** to continue the High Density Housing Safety and Security Project to reduce crime and provide better access to justice, health and education services for residents living in high density housing on Ainslie Avenue.
- > **\$49.9 million** to redevelop and renew public housing at Gowrie Court in Narrabundah.
- > **\$7.2 million** to extend the work of the Public Housing Renewal Taskforce, developing new properties along the Northbourne corridor and the Public Housing Renewal Program.
- > **\$350,000** to undertake early planning future housing options for the current residents at Ainslie Village.



OLDER CANBERRANS

The Active Ageing Framework sets out a shared vision that all senior Canberrans lead active, healthy and rewarding lives as valued members of our community.

We want to make sure that services and programs are inclusive; that opportunities exist for seniors to be socially connected and active; and that the needs of seniors are recognised in good urban planning for user friendly environments that benefit all ages.

In 2017-18 the Budget delivers these goals through a number of initiatives supporting older Canberrans:

- > A **\$7.1 million** mental health package, including an expansion of the Older Persons Community Mental Health Team, which provides responsive and expert community mental health services for people over 65 years of age.
- > **\$1 million** in skills and training assistance, including initiatives to help mature-age workers connect mature age students to training and employment opportunities so they can up-skill or re-skill to take advantage of new employment opportunities.
- > **\$136,000** to fund a scoping study to guide a major investment in broadening the current Hospital in the Home Program to service a wider range of patients.

WOMEN AND FAMILIES

The ACT Government recognises that achieving gender equality requires strong commitment, leadership and an ongoing effort.

The 2017-18 Budget delivers more initiatives to improve the lives of women and girls and boost their participation in the community, including:

- > **\$68 million** for early planning and future delivery of the Centenary Hospital for Women and Children to expand and improve the services and support for patients of maternity and paediatric services, including the addition of a paediatric high dependency unit.
- > A **\$7.1 million** mental health package, including specialised perinatal mental health services for new mothers that require mental health support.
- > **\$5.5 million** in new funding for sports, including a focus on women's sport to extend the Performance Agreement with the Canberra Capitals basketball team and increase support for the Canberra United women's football team.
- > **\$1 million** to develop and deliver a strategy to address the low proportion of women in male-dominated trades by reducing the barriers women face in entering a trade at an individual and community level.
- > **\$147,000** to the ACT Fire and Rescue Recruitment College to encourage women's participation in line with the Women in Emergency Services Strategy.
- > Continuing to deliver investment in programs to ensure all Canberrans feel and stay safe through the **\$21 million** Safer Families package.



CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE CANBERRANS

This Budget continues the ACT Government's strong support for, and celebration of, our diverse cultural communities.

We encourage stronger social cohesion through events like the National Multicultural Festival, multicultural community broadcasters and community participation programs.

In 2017-18 the ACT Government will do more with new initiatives including:

- > **\$1.4 million** for refugees and asylum seekers to improve their English language skills through expanding English language programs, and to enter the workforce with the assistance of a job brokerage service.
- > Continuing to promote Canberra as a diverse, multicultural and vibrant international city through a range of arts and events programs and ongoing international engagement efforts.



