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## **INCREASED INVESTMENT INTO EARLY INTERVENTION IS CRUCIAL TO KEEPING NSW KIDS SAFE**

**The NSW Government has made significant efforts to address the chronic underfunding of the state's child protection system, but to stop vulnerable children reaching the crisis end in the first place, we must invest earlier in children and families at risk.**

As the NSW Treasurer prepares the 2024-25 Budget, Fams, the NSW Peak Body for children and family early intervention services, said this is an opportunity for the Government to turn this situation around.

**Fams Chief Executive Officer Susan Watson** said: "The evidence shows that early intervention and prevention works and is instrumental in keeping NSW children safe."

"We've seen the Government make vital investments into addressing the acute end of child protection. It's imperative to recalibrate this focus by allocating more resources to early intervention and prevention services."

Fams has outlined how to effectively protect vulnerable children in NSW via their [2024 Budget Submission](#).

**"Early intervention and prevention services have not seen a funding increase in over 10 years. We are calling on the Minns Government to increase funding by 25% across early intervention and prevention programs, with a focus on Aboriginal children and families" she said.**

Less than 9% of the spend on NSW child protection services is spent on early intervention and prevention services.

**"The evidence is clear that early intervention is highly effective. We're calling on the NSW Government to invest in a new evidence-based parenting program, *smalltalk*. It's a low-cost, high-impact opportunity to support positive parenting change and improve early childhood outcomes."**

Fams said the program is being delivered successfully in 388 locations across Victoria. A three-year randomised trial showed that participation in the program resulted in increased parenting confidence and improvements in children's learning and developmental outcomes, lasting into school years.

**"The 2023 Australian Child Maltreatment Study produced sobering statistics. Two in three participants reported that they had experienced at least one form of abuse or neglect before they were 18 years old," Ms Watson said.**

**"These statistics cannot be ignored. We want to see the Government take action to ensure these numbers do not continue in NSW."**

**"Fams recommends that the NSW Government establishes a state-based government and sector taskforce to meet quarterly. We want to see the development of an action-oriented plan with clear lines of accountability."**

"This is all about rebalancing the system, sustaining and growing the early intervention response, and helps to prevent children in NSW from falling into crisis."

To view the Budget Submission and more information about Fams, go to [www.fams.asn.au](http://www.fams.asn.au)

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## **About Fams**

Fams is the NSW peak body that represents the child protection NGO early intervention and prevention sector. We advocate for improved policies for children, families, communities, and services. Fams works collaboratively with Government, policy and decision-makers, non-government organisations, academic organisations, peak bodies, the family and community services sector, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and organisations working with diverse communities.