



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

*Tuesday, 5 November 2024*

### **FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES LEADERS MEET WITH NSW MINISTER**

Some 20 NSW early intervention service providers for children and their families gathered at a Sydney roundtable with NSW Minister for Families and Communities Kate Washington today to discuss ongoing challenges in the sector.

The roundtable was convened by Fams, the peak body for NSW not-for-profit family and children's services in NSW.

Fams CEO Susan Watson thanked Minister Washington for attending the roundtable and said it was a great chance to discuss critical topics including how does NSW create interconnected systems of care for children, young people, families and communities.

"We had a very constructive morning with the Minister, and I thank her for taking the time to hear directly from service providers the reality of providing support to children, young people and families," she said.

Ms Watson said the sector empathised with the Minister over the enormity of the task facing her.

**"But if the government do not commit to investing in supporting families early, we will continue to see children removed from families, and the heartache and trauma that impacts a family for generations. The right support, early, has the power to stop this".**

"There is an urgent need for significant investment in supports for our Aboriginal children and families who experience a far greater risk of child removal due to the systemic disadvantage and racism that exists, and the pervasive and ongoing effects of colonisation on individuals, families, and communities."

Early intervention services have not received an increase in funding for more than 10 years. Services are committed and accountable to the families within their community and will do whatever it takes to support them. But they are exhausted and stretched to their limit.

**"Right now we are seeing high levels of burnout, with staff leaving the sector in droves which is leading to skills and knowledge shortages across NSW," Ms Watson said.**

**"We are in need of urgent investment just to keep the sector afloat."**

"What we heard clearly today is that NSW child and family sector stand ready to work with the NSW Government to ensure that child and family services get the funding they need, so families get the support they deserve," she said.

**“We call on the NSW Government to facilitate a taskforce of Ministers and Peak Bodies representing the different sectors across government, to design a system that breaks down barriers to supporting families.**

“If we get areas such as early intervention right, there are enormous flow-on social and economic benefits that will be felt across communities and the entire state.”

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

**Media contact: Phil McCall 0438 619 987**

### **About Fams**

Fams is the peak body in New South Wales. Our mission is to advocate for improved policies and resources for early intervention and prevention NGOs that support NSW children, families, and their communities.

Fams works collaboratively with Government, Policy and decision-makers, non-government organisations, academic organisations, peak bodies, family and community services sector, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and organisations working with diverse communities. We advocate for improved policies and resources for children, young people, families, communities and services.