

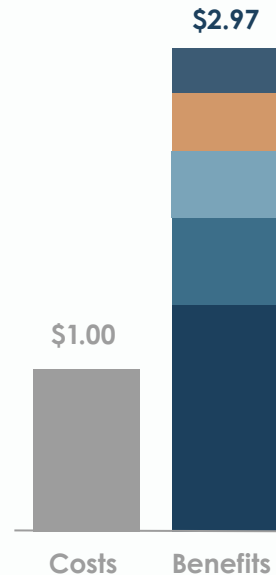
# Fams NSW Advocacy Platform 2026–2027



## What If the Smartest Dollar Was Spent Earlier?

With the right investment and the right settings, every \$1 invested could become:

Item	Benefit
Avoided Costs of OOHC Entries - Diversion	\$1.39
Avoided Costs of OOHC - Restoration	\$0.54
Avoided Costs of ROSH Reports	\$0.41
Healing and Thriving	\$0.35
Avoided Costs to Other Government Services	\$0.28
<b>Total social and economic benefits</b>	<b>\$2.97</b>



(Fams & Lumenia, 2026)

### About the Model

Fams NSW commissioned Lumenia to offer a clearer view of the benefits that Early Intervention brings to NSW.

Based on best available evidence, this analysis illustrates how Early Intervention can benefit children, families, communities and the NSW budget over time.

### Why Rebalancing the System Matters

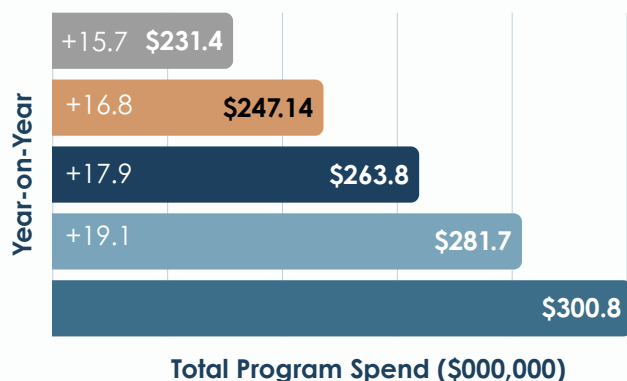
NSW spends more than any other state or territory on child protection and most of this money is spent after harm has already happened.<sup>(1)</sup>

Despite being the part of the system able to stop escalation, Early Intervention and Prevention made up just 12% of our state's child protection budget last year.<sup>(2)</sup>

### How Do We Get There?

If NSW wants to achieve the proven economic and social returns highlighted in the modelling, the CAFS program must be invested in at the right scale, with the right design settings.

**To realise our evidence-based aspiration, we need to uplift CAFS funding by 30% and transition 40% of service delivery to ACCOs (in addition to indexation).**



## Our Advocacy Focus

Our advocacy calls for policy and practice settings that:

1. **Scale Early Intervention** and prevention efforts so families are reached sooner, before challenges escalate.
2. **Strengthen and sustain the workforce** by investing in the people and organisations delivering trusted, relational support.

All of this work should centre lived experience by ensuring outcomes reflect the strengths, culture and wisdom of children, families and communities.

## In the year ahead, we're advocating for:

### An Early Intervention and Prevention sector that is better resourced to meet the increasing needs of our communities.

- Early Intervention is transformative and cost-effective.<sup>(3)</sup>
- Increased resourcing in Early Intervention will mean less families in NSW accessing intensive services.<sup>(4)</sup>
- Early Intervention services uplift the ability of children, young people, and families to choose services that best meet their needs.<sup>(5)</sup>

### A sustainable, skilled, and supported workforce to deliver high-quality Early Intervention and Prevention.

- A strong workforce means better outcomes for families.<sup>(6)</sup>
- Training and wellbeing are essential for frontline workers.<sup>(7)</sup>
- Workforce planning must be genuine, informed by sector knowledge and grounded in community need.<sup>(8)</sup>
- Continuity of care should allow for strong relational work that is both cost-efficient and clinically effective<sup>(9)</sup>

- (1) (2025) Australia's spiraling cost of missing early warning signs in our children. Available at: <https://www.minderoo.org/media/australia-s-spiraling-cost-of-missing-early-warning-signs-in-our-children/> (Accessed: 01 April 2026).
- (2) (2026) Report on Government Services 2026. Available at: <https://www.pc.gov.au/ongoing/report-on-government-services/community-services/child-protection/>.
- (3) (2024) Family Connect and Support Program Evaluation Final Report. Research Centre for Children and Families, The University of Sydney & Curijo Pty Ltd.
- (4) (2024) NSW Department of Communities and Justice Targeted Earlier Intervention Program Evaluation Final Report. Taylor Fry, Social Ventures Australia and G.U.I.R.
- (5) (2023). The prevalence and impact of child maltreatment in Australia: Findings from the Australian Child Maltreatment Study: Brief Report. Australian Child Maltreatment Study, Queensland University of Technology.
- (6) (2026) Hoffmeister, M. Influence of Public Child Welfare Caseworker Turnover on Child Safety Decision-Making.
- (7) (8) (2021) The Social Sector in NSW: Capitalising on the Potential for Growth, A Report Prepared for the New South Wales Council of Social Service, Sydney.
- (9) (2022). Trends and needs in the Australian child welfare workforce: An exploratory study. Canberra: ACU Institute of Child Protection Studies. <https://doi.org/10.24268/acu.8x396>.

To access our economic model or to find out more about this work, reach out [info@fams.asn.au](mailto:info@fams.asn.au).

