

NSW Budget 2023-24



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Labor confirms \$200 million lifeline to keep vulnerable kids safe

The Minns Labor Government's first Budget has provided a **\$200 million** lifeline to the State's Out-of-Home Care (OOHC) system, ensuring thousands of vulnerable kids are kept safe.

OOHC supports 15,000 children and young people in NSW who are unable to live safely with their own parents.

The OOHC program sees foster and kinship carers take on the responsibilities of a parent to provide a safe, nurturing and secure family environment for children and young people needing care.

Under the former government, funding for this important program was left to spiral out of control, with a significant funding deficit that was due to run out two months before the end of the 2023-24 financial year.

This budget black hole would have put thousands of children at risk and would have left the NSW Government failing to meet its statutory obligations to protect vulnerable children.

This Budget delivers a **\$200 million** rescue package that fully funds the Out-of-Home Care system to the end of the 2023-24 financial year.

Additionally, the NSW Government has committed to fixing the broken child protection system in NSW.

Despite the number of children supported by the OOHC system remaining relatively stable, a series of policy failures by the former government created a spiralling OOHC budget crisis combined with worsening outcomes for vulnerable children and young people.

A recent report into the child protection system found vulnerable children were holed up in motel rooms without enough food or clothing, despite non-government providers being paid more than a million dollars for their care.

Over the three years from 30 June 2020 to 30 June 2023 there has been a tripling in the number of children in expensive emergency arrangements, including hotels and motels, and an increase in the average length of stay for all placement types.

The Government will be setting out long-term plans to reform the child protection system and repair the budget, as part of its plan to rebuild essential services and take pressure off families and businesses.

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