

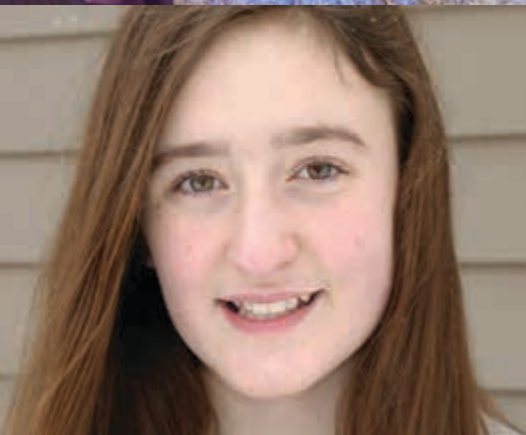


Family &  
Community  
Services

# Empowering people to live fulfilling lives and achieve their potential

**FACS stakeholder 2015–16 budget briefing**

23 June 2015





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**‘every child deserves a safe and stable place to live’**

This is my first NSW Budget as Minister for Family and Community Services and Social Housing. It is a great privilege to work with you in providing support to some of our most vulnerable citizens in New South Wales.

Housing affordability is a critical issue in New South Wales and part of the solution rests on increasing the quantity and quality of public housing stock. In working with partners inside and outside of government, we are backing this ambition with additional resources.

This year we will spend almost \$1 billion on social housing and homelessness services. This includes \$342 million on social housing supply to fund new capital works and works in progress, which represents an increase of 182 per cent on the 2014–15 Budget. We are also working with the Premier’s Innovation Initiative and Behavioural Insight Unit to develop better and more innovative ways of delivering social housing. Your input and involvement is vital in helping us to achieve this goal.

Every child deserves a safe and stable place to live. We are therefore working with families to ensure that children receive the right tailored support to meet their needs. Our Safe Home for Life program is strengthening the child protection system with \$60.4 million funding this year.

We are transitioning the care of children and young people to the non-government sector. Harnessing your experience and expertise is crucial to improving the wellbeing outcomes of children and young people in care. This Budget delivers an extra \$50 million this year – \$200 million over four years – for additional services to support the increased numbers of children and young people in care. I very much look forward to working with you over the next year to make a real difference.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brad Hazzard". The signature is stylized and cursive.

**Brad Hazzard MP**

Minister for Family and Community Services  
Minister for Social Housing



**‘the NDIS will transform the way we respond to the individual needs and choices of people with disability’**

This will be a defining year in the provision of ageing and disability services and I am proud to be the minister responsible for these areas.

I am particularly pleased that the NSW Government is delivering the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), which will transform the way we respond to the individual needs and choices of people with disability.

We are on track to deliver the roll out of the scheme in NSW by 2018 and are delivering on our commitment for the NDIS to be rolled out one year early in the Nepean and Blue Mountains area for around 2,000 children and young people. We will also deliver the final year of the Hunter NDIS trial site, which will build on the lessons learned over the past two years and bring together good ways of doing things to share with other parts of NSW.

In addition, this year we will spend \$726 million to deliver the final year of the Ready Together scheme, which gives more people greater choice and flexibility about how they live their lives and supports them to make decisions and plan for their future.

This year we will also continue to implement the NSW Ageing Strategy, which will support more of our citizens in realising the benefits of an ageing population and to harness the contribution of seniors in our communities. I’m really pleased that we are able to support so many local community projects across the State and to continue to fund initiatives such as the Tech Savvy Seniors program and the Seniors Card scheme, which help to promote inclusion and tackle isolation in our society.

I also welcome an addition to our portfolio, the responsibility for multiculturalism. Our diversity makes New South Wales such an exciting and dynamic place and my department will work tirelessly to ensure that we deliver inclusion and harmony across the state.

I look forward to working with you over the next year.

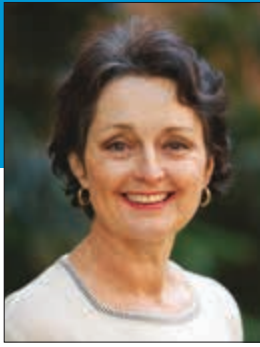
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Ajaka". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

**John Ajaka MLC**

Minister for Ageing

Minister for Disability Services

Minister for Multiculturalism



**‘while there is no silver bullet to end domestic and family violence, by integrating our response we can certainly do more’**

The NSW Government’s leadership and commitment to the prevention of domestic and family violence (DFV) continues in this year’s Budget with extensive investment in services and programs.

As the first Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, I want to ensure we have a whole of government approach to DFV. I will be working closely with my ministerial colleagues and also across the parliament to achieve strong bipartisanship and a unified commitment to the prevention of domestic and family violence.

In this year’s Budget, the NSW Government will continue to invest, with an estimated \$148.5 million over four years in specialist DVF programs and services.

This year sees the expansion of Safer Pathway referral process for victims, a key component of It Stops Here which streamlines information sharing and coordination between service providers.

Two *Safer Pathway* trial sites successfully commenced at Waverley and Orange, and in July 2015 an additional four Safer Pathway sites will commence in Bankstown, Broken Hill, Tweed Heads and Parramatta. Funding for Safer Pathway is \$2.3 million in 2015–16.

The NSW Government will commence a pilot Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme based on a similar scheme operating in the United Kingdom. This is another new tool the Government will use to tackle domestic violence. I am delighted that within two months of being re-elected we have released the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme Discussion Paper and held roundtable consultations with domestic and family violence and justice experts. NSW will be the first state in Australia to pilot the Scheme.

The Staying Home Leaving Violence program will be expanded to four additional locations helping women who have separated from a violent partner or family member, and their children, to remain safely in their own home or another home of their choice. Funding for the Staying Home Leaving Violence program is \$5.6 million in 2015–16.

Police play a major role in tackling domestic violence. That's why the NSW Police Force capability to counter domestic and family violence will be increased in 2015–16 through the appointment of 24 domestic violence specialist police officers.

We also need to take a holistic look at all programs across the State and identify the programs that work well and any service gaps that may exist.

While there is no silver bullet to end domestic and family violence, by integrating our response we can certainly do more. I am under no illusions about the challenges ahead, but by working with our non-government partners over the next year, we can make a real difference to the lives of vulnerable people.



**Pru Goward MP**

Minister for Mental Health

Minister for Medical Research

Assistant Minister for Health

Minister for Women

Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

# Executive summary

The Department of Family and Community Services (FACS) has an ambitious goal to break disadvantage and build inclusive communities. Our vision is for everyone to be able to live a fulfilling life and achieve their potential.

Breaking disadvantage is a difficult challenge for both FACS and for some of the people we work for. We need to remain focussed on providing the right support to people to enable them to take responsibility for their own lives when they need help.

To be successful we must build on the strengths of individuals, families and communities. We must provide the right support, at the right time for the right situation. We need to understand the challenges and opportunities of the people we serve from their perspective, and provide support that will help them to take advantage of opportunities and meet their challenges.

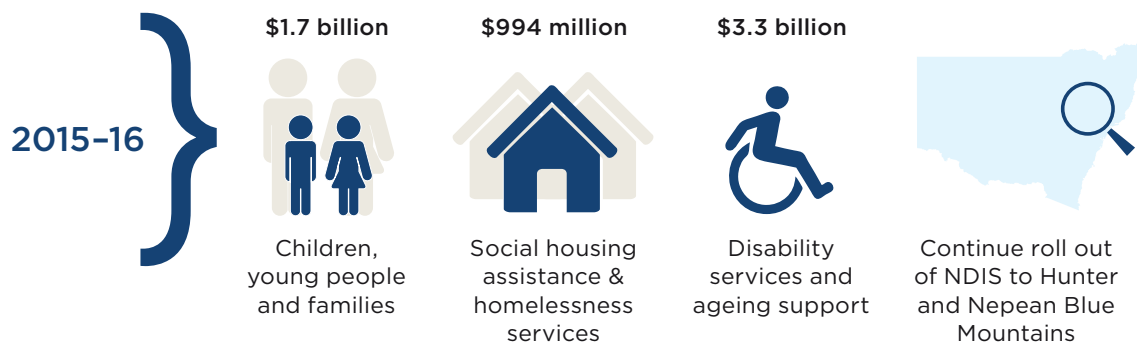
The Government recognises to break disadvantage we must work in partnership with our clients, the community and the non-government organisation (NGO) sector. NGOs have an enormous ability to be flexible, innovative and person-centred; the qualities that can help us realise our goals. Increasingly the Government is tapping into the strength of NGOs to deliver lasting change.

FACS has an extensive reform agenda that crosses the breadth of our joint work. It is perhaps the greatest time of reform in the Department's history. The work is extremely challenging. It is also very exciting and has the potential to achieve great things for the people we serve.

To achieve our goals, this year's budget delivers \$6.1 billion to FACS, a 7 per cent increase in funding from last year.

Our key investments for 2015–16 include:

- \$1.7 billion on the protection of children, young people and their families
- \$994 million for social housing assistance and homelessness services
- \$3.3 billion for disability services and ageing support, including preparation for further roll out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), the continued roll out in the Hunter, and the early transition of children and young people in Penrith and the Blue Mountains.



In the future we will focus more effectively on our clients and the outcomes and quality of our services. We will concentrate more not just on delivering services, but on involving everyone in policy development and service design and planning. Our collective wisdom, skills and experience will achieve the greatest impact.

The Government looks forward to continuing to build on our real working relationships with non-government partners so that we can break disadvantage and build an inclusive society.

## Highlights and progress in 2014-15

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We spent over \$1.6 billion on the protection of children and young people. Whilst the number of children referred to FACS at risk of significant harm has increased, the number of children entering care has not increased by the same level.

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\$901.8 million has been spent on social housing assistance and homelessness services, including funding to support [Going Home Staying Home](#) – our reforms to specialist homelessness services.

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We are giving more flexibility, more choice and more control to people with disability through our [Ready Together](#) reforms, which will deliver 47,200 new places for people with disability to access support.

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We are ahead of schedule in delivering the roll out of the NDIS and completed year two of a three year trial in the Hunter region.

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We began the process of selling properties at Millers Point, which will allow us to invest in new housing supply.

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The [Safe Home for Life](#) program of reforms to casework commenced, improving the effectiveness of the child protection system in NSW.

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We have implemented [It Stops Here](#), an important reform to tackle domestic and family violence. The [Staying Home Leaving Violence](#) program was also expended and is helping women who want to live separately from a violent husband or partner, but remain at home.

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# Our work


FACS aims to ensure that all people are empowered to live fulfilling lives and achieve their potential in inclusive communities.

Our clients are vulnerable and increasingly complex; presenting with a depth and breadth of problems which only new approaches can surmount. Drug and alcohol abuse, intergenerational disadvantage, domestic and family violence, disability, lower levels of employment, and a challenging private housing market combine to produce major challenges for individuals, families and communities. Yet it is the strength of people, our ability to overcome the obstacles in our lives and build meaningful and fulfilling lives, which inspires us to empower positive change.



Our work strives to improve lives by supporting:

- people with disability, so they can realise their potential and participate fully in life
- people in vulnerable circumstances, with social housing that can help overcome disadvantage
- children, young people and their families, so they have the best possible start in life and are protected from abuse and neglect
- communities, so they are more inclusive and begin to thrive
- families, so they are safer from domestic and family violence
- Aboriginal people, families and communities so they have better outcomes
- people to participate in social and economic life.



We do this by:

- putting people at the centre of our practice
- creating local solutions to address local problems
- working with government, non-government, community and corporate partners
- being flexible, innovative and connected
- leading evidence-based social policy reform.

From July, the Office of Communities and Multicultural NSW will work with FACS so that:

- issues that affect community harmony and social cohesion are raised and resolved.

# Major reforms to break disadvantage

A key priority of this Government is to better protect the most vulnerable members of our community and break the cycle of disadvantage.

Intervening early in the life of a problem is crucial, and much of our effort is concentrated here. More than \$337 million is allocated to early intervention, prevention and community support activities.

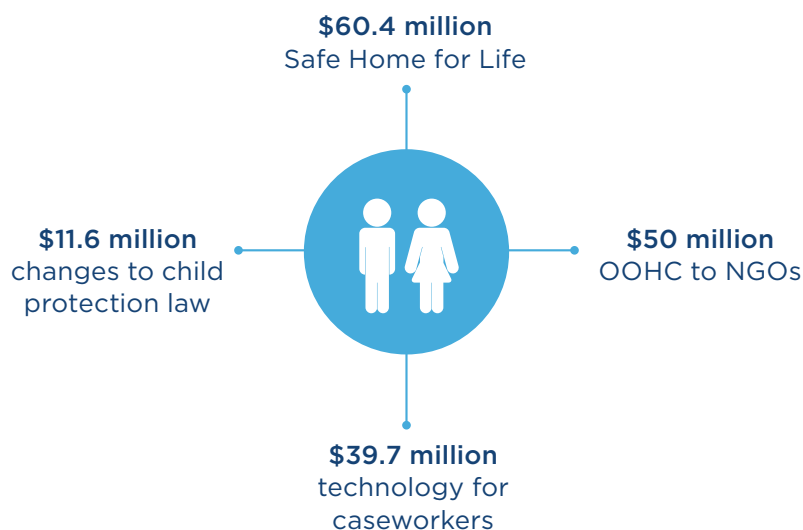
Matching the right mix of services to the right person in the right place means our clients need more choice, more flexibility and ultimately, better quality. Our partnerships with NGOs are critical in achieving this.

Services for the most vulnerable in our community must not only meet their immediate crisis but help place them on a path to a better life.

## Children, young people and families

This year's budget will continue to support our goal of providing vulnerable children and young people with long-term, stable environments that help keep them safe; whether that's at home with their families, in out-of-home care (OOHC) or in an open adoption. FACS will invest \$1.7 billion.

We will keep focusing on early intervention and providing the best support for at risk families.



Key investments include:

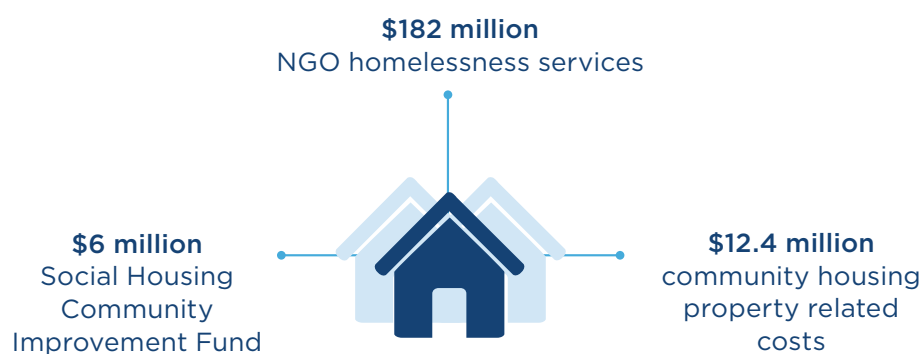
- \$60.4 million to continue the Safe Home for Life reforms to improve the effectiveness of the child protection system in NSW.
- \$50 million to support the transition of OOHC services to the non-government sector
- \$39.7 million (including \$26.1 million capital) to design and replace technology for child protection workers
- \$11.6 million across the government to implement changes to child protection law.

## Social housing

FACS is working towards building a social housing system that is sustainable, helps people live independently, breaks disadvantage and provides a safety net for those who need it. This year's budget will commit \$994 million for social housing assistance and homelessness services.

Key initiatives include:

- \$182 million for specialist homelessness services delivered by NGOs
- \$12.4 million to fund community housing property related costs
- \$6 million to deliver a Social Housing Community Improvement Fund
- developing a new social housing framework.

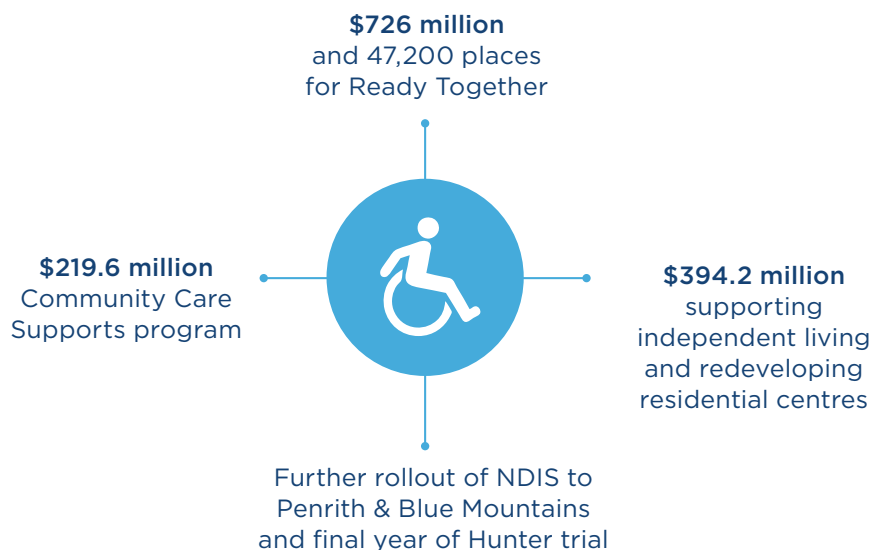


## Disability support

This year's budget will commit \$3.3 billion for disability services and ageing support to ensure people have choice and control over their supports and NSW is ready for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

Key initiatives include:

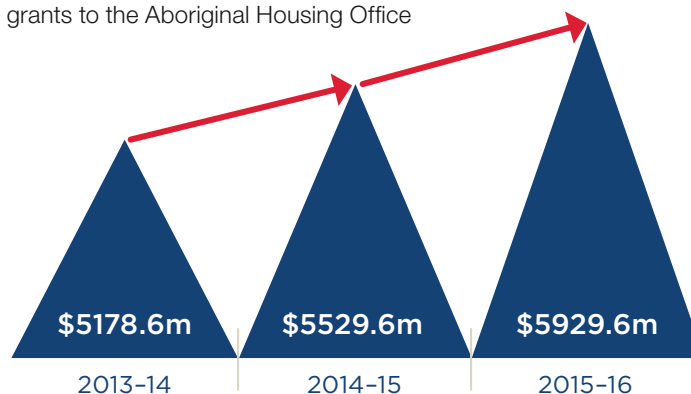
- \$726 million to deliver the final year of Ready Together, and provide 47,200 places for people with disability
- further roll out of the NDIS, including early transition of children and young people in Nepean and the Blue Mountains and the final year of the Hunter trial
- \$394.2 million to help people live more independently including redeveloping large residential centres in Stockton, Orange, Westmead and Rydalmere, and 14 non-government operated centres across the state
- \$219.6 million for the Community Care Supports program, including home-based assistance and support for younger people to continue living in their communities.



# Budget highlights

2015–16 FACS Budget	\$000
<b>Protecting children and young people</b>	
Earlier intervention for vulnerable people and support for communities	337,400
Statutory child protection	453,700
Out-of-home care for vulnerable children and young people	960,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,751,100</b>
<b>Supporting people with disability</b>	
Community support for people with disability, their family and carers	947,800
Short-term interventions for people with disability, their family and carers	431,200
Supported accommodation for people with disability	1,728,100
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,107,100</b>
<b>Social housing and support for the homeless*</b>	
Social housing assistance and tenancy support	787,500
Homelessness services	283,900
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,071,400</b>
<b>FACS recurrent 2015–16 Budget</b>	<b>5,929,600</b>
<b>FACS Capital Expenditure 2015–16 Budget</b>	<b>209,100</b>
<b>TOTAL FACS 2015–16 Budget</b>	<b>6,138,700</b>

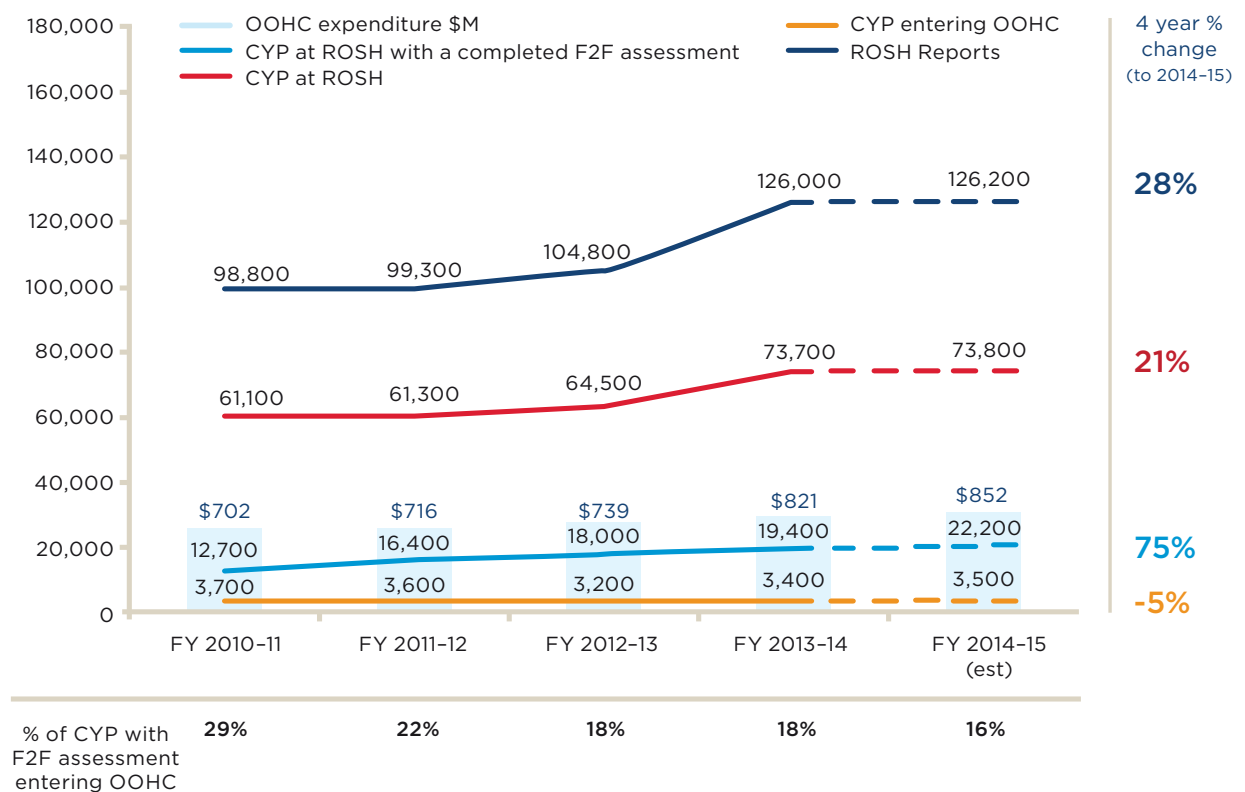
\* includes \$91 million in grants to the Aboriginal Housing Office



**FACS published recurrent budget**

# Children and young people are protected from abuse and neglect, and have the best possible lives

## Comparison of ROSH\*, OOHC\*\* Entries and Face to Face assessments\*\*\*



\* Children and young people at risk of significant harm  
 \*\* Children and young people entering out-of-home care  
 \*\*\* Children and young people receiving a face-to-face visit by a FACS caseworker  
 All figures rounded to nearest hundred.

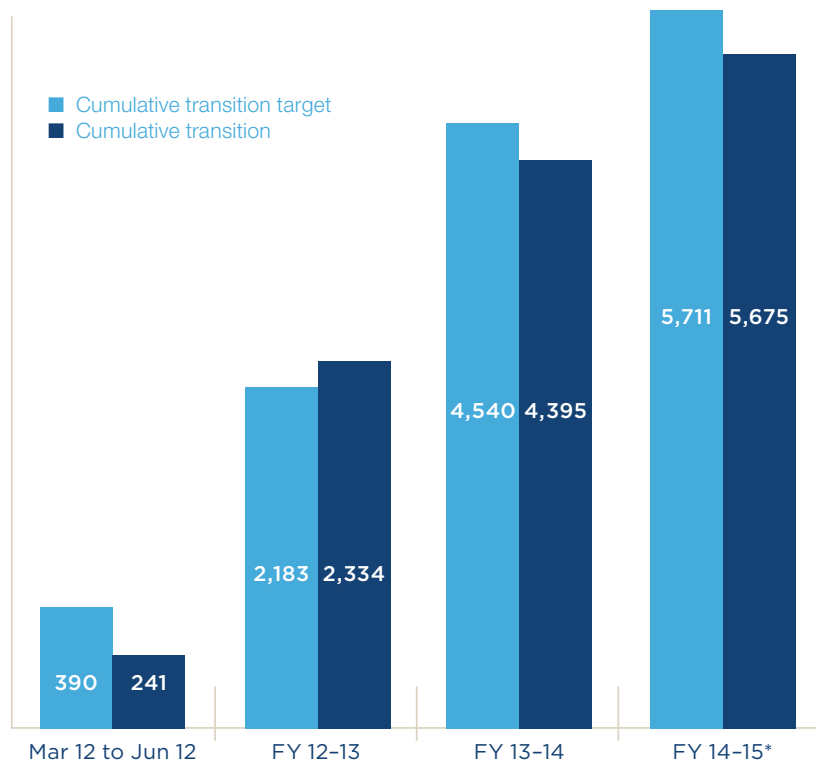
This year's budget investment will continue to support our goal of providing vulnerable children and young people long-term, stable environments, to help keep them safe, whether this is at home with their families, in a placement in OOHC or with an adoptive family.

Key initiatives include:

## Out-of-home care

FACS recognises that NGOs have the knowledge, flexibility and close community relationships to deliver better quality services to children in OOHC. OOHC funding has been boosted by \$50 million in 2015-16, a total of \$200 million over four years, to support the increasing numbers of children and young people needing care.

From March 2012 to 30 April 2015, 5,675 children in OOHC have been transitioned to our non-government partners. This equals 99 per cent of our three year transition target.



\* as at 30 April 2015

## Open adoption support

Adoption is an important tool to establish new, safe homes for life for children and young people. FACS and our non-government partners are focusing effort on driving cultural change and improving the sector's understanding of open adoption. This will support removing the backlog of children and young people in OOHC awaiting adoption.

### Institute of Open Adoption

The Government is investing \$1 million in 2015–16 to establish an Institute of Open Adoption that will become a leader in developing best practice in Australian adoption. The Institute's focus will include applied research into all aspects of adoption including why adoption may be important, how adoption processes can be improved and what supports are necessary for all involved. In developing the Institute we will engage key thought leaders in adoption.

## Intensive Family Support and Intensive Family Preservation

We will invest \$18.6 million in 2015–16 to provide intensive, flexible and individually tailored support to vulnerable children and their families where the child is at risk of being placed in OOHC.

## Safe Home for Life

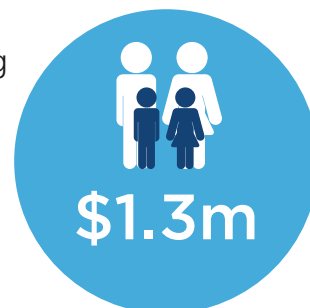
In 2015–16 Safe Home for Life Reforms will receive \$60.4 million to improve the effectiveness of the child protection system in NSW.

### Child protection legislative reforms

The Government will provide \$11.6 million in 2015–16 to implement child protection law reforms and practice change. This will help reduce growth in demand for statutory child protection services and build local service networks that reduce risk for vulnerable children, young people and families. The funding mostly targets practices and services that help families keep children and young people safely at home. Families where there are domestic and family violence issues, drug and alcohol abuse and mental health issues are the main focus.

### Family Group Conferencing

We will spend \$1.3 million in 2015–16 to implement Family Group Conferencing. Family Group Conferencing is a strengths-based form of alternative dispute resolution which supports FACS work with families in a way that demonstrates partnership and encourages greater parental decision making and responsibility.



### More support for caseworkers

FACS will continue our investment in caseworker support workers with \$5.9 million allocated in 2015–16. Seventy three caseworker support workers will be employed in total. These workers enable FACS caseworkers to spend more time working face-to-face with families at risk.

### Improved casework practice

The Government will provide a further \$1.2 million in 2015–16 to Practice First, which aims to achieve safety for children and young people. This funding will employ additional temporary Casework Specialists to support the 14 Practice First sites that commenced in October 2014. Thirty nine Community Service Centres use this model.

### Better use of technology

In 2015–16 FACS will spend \$39.7 million (including \$26.1 million capital). This is part of a four year \$100 million commitment to design and replace frontline technology systems. This will improve the productivity of caseworkers by freeing them up to spend more time with vulnerable families.

Our new child protection client information system ChildStory, will enable better information sharing between government and non-government agencies.



**\$39.7 million**

to design & replace  
frontline technology  
systems

### Ensuring the quality of out-of-home care

FACS is developing a Quality Assurance Framework that ensures that children and young people in OOHC placed with NGOs or with FACS are achieving the best possible outcomes. Independent research bodies are currently developing a framework that will help identify how to measure outcomes, outline FACS monitoring function and affirm the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders.

# People with disability are supported to realise their potential

People with disability have the same rights as other Australians to determine their own best interests and make decisions about their lives. This year's budget will commit \$3.3 billion for disability services to ensure people have choice and control over their supports, are provided with support over their lifetime and that NSW is ready for the NDIS.

Key initiatives include:

## Ready Together

The Government is investing \$726 million to deliver the final year of Ready Together, and provide 47,200 places for people with disability.

*Ready Together* will continue to support people in large residential centres to move to more modern, home-like supported accommodation and support the sector and its workforce to build its capacity and readiness for the NDIS.

The Industry Development Fund, delivered in partnership with National Disability Services, will support providers to design and cost their services in readiness for the NDIS.

The CareCareers website will help source workers for the 25,000 projected new jobs the NDIS will create in NSW.

The funding is made up of \$71.1 million for decision support, \$349.3 million for individual support, \$204.2 million to support people in the community across their life span, \$84.4 million for large residential redevelopments and \$17.2 million for sector readiness and capacity.



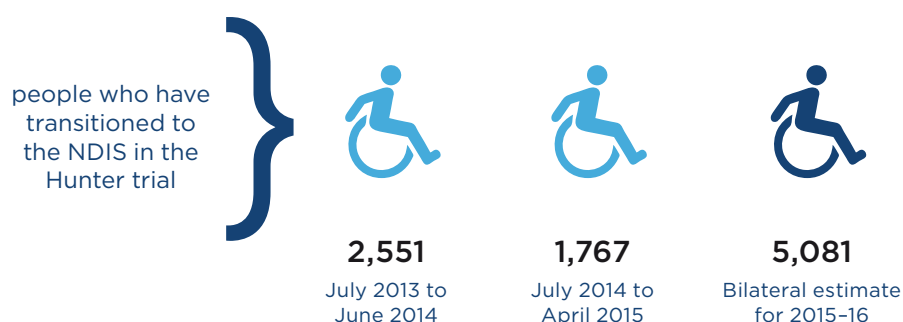
## Roll out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

The Government has committed to an early transition for one year to the NDIS in the Nepean Blue Mountains District for up to 2,000 children and young people.

From 1 July 2015, there will be support services in place across the District to help children, young people, their families and carers prepare for participation in the NDIS. They will start to work with planners to create their individualised funding package from September.

The final year of the Hunter trial site extends until 30 June 2016. In the final year of the trial the number of people who are to transition to the NDIS is 5,081. The focus will be the Lake Macquarie and Maitland areas.

NSW is currently working with the Commonwealth to finalise an agreement for full scheme transition.



## Commitment to support people with disability to live independently

The Government is committed to the redevelopment of all large residential centres by June 2018 so that their residents can live with more privacy, exercise more individual choice and have greater community involvement.

Projects totalling \$394.2 million to help people live more independently, including redeveloping large residential centres in Stockton, Orange, Westmead and Rydalmere, as well as 14 non-government operated large residential centres across the state are well advanced.

Five new group homes in Orange have been completed and opened. A further five homes are due for completion by December 2015.

Twenty one new group homes out of 64 have been completed in Sydney with the rest of the new homes scheduled for completion in late 2016.

Thirteen new homes have been completed out of 75 for the redevelopment of 14 large residential centres operated by NGOs, another 20 new homes are in construction and scheduled for completion at the end of 2015.

Thirty properties have been acquired for the redevelopment of the Hunter Residences and construction will start on the first stage of 10 new group homes for the redevelopment of the Stockton Centre this year.



**39 out of 149**

new homes have been completed for the redevelopment of large residential centres

## Community Care Supports

FACS will provide \$219.6 million for the Community Care Supports program, including home-based assistance and support for younger people with disability to continue living in their communities.

The program funds basic maintenance and support services, such as domestic assistance and personal care, to help people with disability continue living in their own homes.

## Developing skills and participating in the community

The Government is providing \$143 million in 2015–16 to support people with disability to participate in their communities, achieve their goals and develop the skills to become work ready.

A range of individually funded community engagement initiatives, including Community Participation, Life Choices, Active Ageing and Transition to Work; supports people with disability to participate in activities of their choice. They can also choose their provider and how they want their funding paid, including the option to apply to self manage their funding through a Direct Payment Agreement.

## Employment strategy

The Government is providing \$6 million in funding over three years for the Employment Enablement Strategy to support and promote employing workers with disability and increasing employment outcomes for people with disability.

The strategy comprises two components – the first component supports individuals with an intellectual disability to develop the skills, confidence and qualifications they need to move into employment.

The second component looks to support employers to employ people with disability to better match individuals to specific occupations.



# Social housing assistance is used to break disadvantage

Providing social housing assistance that helps people live independently or get back on their feet is a key priority for the Government. This year we will invest \$994 million in social housing assistance and homelessness services.

Key initiatives include:

## Increased investment in social housing

Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) is improving the standard of dwellings by increasing funding for maintenance and capital expenditure.

\$551 million will be spent on new housing supply and capital maintenance in 2015–16.



## New supply and investment in the future of the portfolio

The 2015–16 Budget is increasing the number of new homes available for social housing.

In 2015–16 LAHC will:

- spend \$342 million (up 182 per cent on the 2014–15 Budget) on social housing supply to fund new capital works and works in progress
- begin building an estimated 1,021 dwellings (up 34 per cent on the 2014–15 Budget).



Over the forward estimates, LAHC is forecast to commence building 4,154 dwellings (up 26 per cent on the 2014–15 budgeted forward estimates).

Projected completions are also up. In 2015–16, LAHC is forecast to complete 770 new social housing dwellings (up 74 per cent on the 2014–15 Budget).

The capital program is being supported by the sale of high value properties such as those at Millers Point, proceeds of which are being used to fund new supply commencements and completions in 2015–16 and beyond.

## Social Housing Policy Framework

A key priority in 2015–16 is developing a new Social Housing Policy Framework to ensure the social housing system is fair, sustainable, and provides a safety net for vulnerable people, while also assisting people to take advantage of opportunities and live independently.

FACS has consulted with stakeholders on the future of the social housing system through the release of a discussion paper. A summary of feedback on the discussion paper was released at the recent social housing forum and is available on the FACS website.

A new Social Housing Policy Framework is being developed for consideration by the Government in mid 2015.

## Social Housing Community Improvement Fund

FACS will deliver a Social Housing Community Improvement Fund of \$6 million in 2015–16 to improve the livability and amenity of social housing communities as well as break down barriers between social housing clients and the wider community.

This initiative will improve local amenities through funding projects up to \$50,000 to undertake physical improvements in areas of high disadvantage.

FACS will be seeking Expressions of Interest from local organisations for project proposals to create safer and better communities. The fund will allow individual or partnership applications.

## Community Housing Leasing

The Government is providing \$75.7 million for the Community Housing Leasing program to allow registered community housing providers to head-lease properties from the private rental market to provide social housing.

The program sustains the supply of social housing for vulnerable members of the community through the leasing of private rental properties.

It provides flexible housing options that meet the needs of clients who have specific housing requirements where existing social housing properties are lacking or in short supply.

The program is delivering up to 5,882 properties to meet short, medium and long term need.



## Crisis and community housing

The Government will allocate \$12.4 million in 2015–16 for community housing providers to maintain, modify and improve their housing portfolio to provide safe and suitable housing. These include:

- maintenance of crisis refuges
- disability modifications and capital improvements to properties managed by community housing providers.

Following the implementation of the Going Home Staying Home reform, the crisis housing portfolio is set to undergo significant changes to meet the reform's requirements. This includes reconfiguring crisis housing to meet service requirements such as additional bathrooms and kitchens.

## Grant programs for social housing clients

The Government is delivering \$2.9 million in grant programs for social housing clients focusing on community development, scholarships and engagement initiatives. These are:

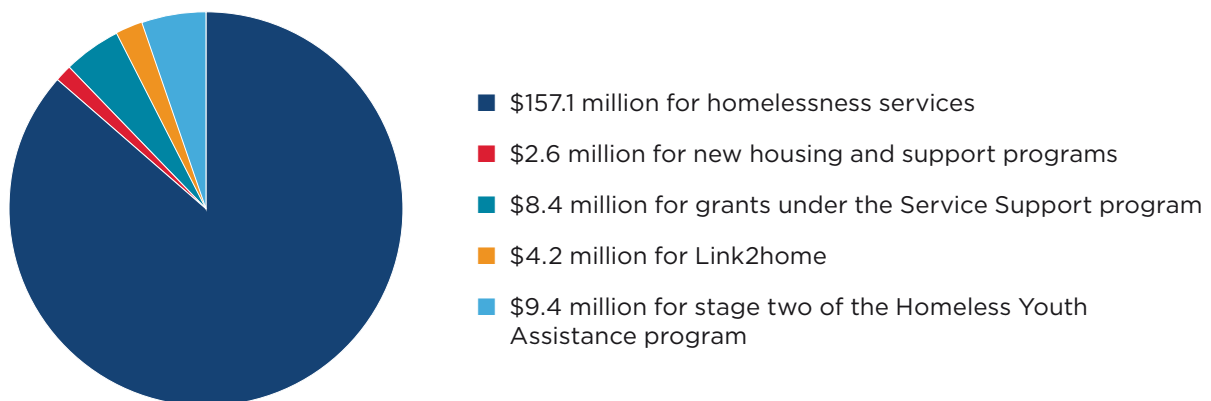
- \$2.2 million to provide opportunities and resources to build the capacity of people to actively engage in their communities
- \$322,000 for the Community Greening program to create community gardening opportunities
- \$400,000 for the Youth Scholarships program which supports young students to complete their Higher School Certificate.

## Reform of the specialist homelessness services system

The Government is continuing the Going Home Staying Home reform of specialist homelessness services in 2015–16 by investing \$182 million in homelessness services and programs that will provide assistance to about 54,000 people a year. These services will help meet clients' needs and break the cycle of homelessness. The reforms are helping to deliver a specialist homelessness system that is more flexible, responsive and can better help the most vulnerable in the community.

Key initiatives are:

- \$157.1 million for homelessness services delivered by NGOs, including inner city specialist homelessness services and women's specialist homelessness services in the inner city
- \$2.6 million for new housing and support programs to help 100 homeless people currently in the inner city to find stable homes in suburban and regional areas through Connect 100
- \$8.4 million in grants under the Service Support Fund program to continue to deliver programs that complement Going Home Staying Home and the wider approach to reducing homelessness
- \$4.2 million for Link2home, the state-wide telephone information and referral service
- \$9.4 million for support and accommodation models under stage two of the Homeless Youth Assistance Program for unaccompanied children and young people.



## Tackling antisocial and illegal behaviour in social housing

The Government plans to introduce measures to address illegal and antisocial behaviour in public housing to ensure the safety and security of tenants.

This includes a one strike policy for serious tenancy agreement breaches; a three strikes policy for tenants who breach their tenancy agreement more than three times in 12 months, as well as confidential neighbour impact statements to the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal to take account of the impact of antisocial behaviour on their neighbours.

# People are assisted to participate in social and economic life

To help older people thrive as they age and to experience the benefits of living longer, the Government is making significant additional investment in this year's budget. Key initiatives include:

## Accessibility grants

Over the next four years FACS will provide \$4 million per annum in grants for local community projects to help local councils, NGOs and small businesses deliver accessibility, active living and mobility projects for seniors. The funding helps a range of organisations to meet the needs of Australia's ageing population. The funding of up to \$50,000 per project will address accessibility for older people ranging from improving outdoor spaces and buildings to participating in events and activities that reduce social isolation.

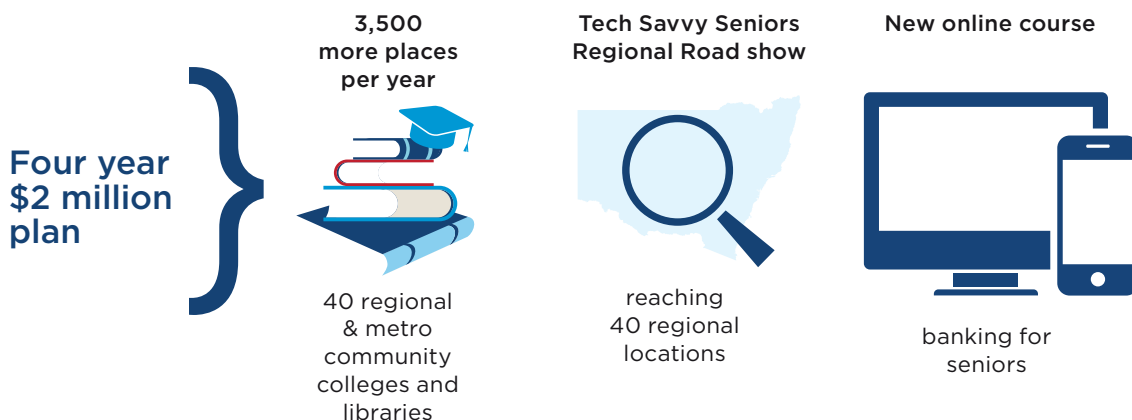
## Tech Savvy Seniors

The Government is doubling funding for the popular Tech Savvy Seniors program, which provides low cost or free training for seniors in using computers, tablets and smart phones. Under the four year, \$2 million plan, the program will expand with:

- 3,500 more places per year across 30 regional and metropolitan community colleges and libraries
- a Tech Savvy Seniors Regional Road Show reaching 40 regional locations
- a new online banking course for seniors.

With corporate partner Telstra, the Government will expand the program for multicultural communities with training in seven different languages.

The program has helped more than 11,000 seniors so far and it is expected that up to 38,000 places will be taken up by seniors over the next four years.



## Seniors Card

FACS will invest an additional \$2 million over four years in the Seniors Card program to expand the number of businesses offering discounts on key living cost for seniors, such as gas and electricity bills, the cost of internet and home delivery of groceries. Rural and remote areas will be a particular focus of the expansion.

## Foodbank

The Government is making a significant contribution to boosting food security for disadvantaged people and communities in NSW. In 2015–16, FACS will provide Foodbank with a \$3 million contribution towards the cost of building a new food distribution warehouse in Blacktown. This is in addition to a \$2 million contribution towards the cost of purchasing land for this warehouse in 2013. Foodbank will also contribute its own funds to the build.

FACS provides Foodbank with annual funding of \$432,000.

Foodbank is a conduit between the food industry's surplus food and the welfare sector's need. They rescue edible but surplus food and groceries from the country's farmers, manufacturers and retailers. Last year Foodbank provided 6.2 million meals in NSW.

## Women's economic opportunities

The Government is focused on improving the economic opportunities of women, in particular by encouraging more women to participate in non-traditional trades. Key initiatives include:

- \$200,000 in annual funding to the Investing in Women Funding Program. Investing in women offers up to \$25,000 in funding for community-based projects that encourage new approaches to training and employment for women in non-traditional trades
- Introducing the Women in Trades Industry Pledge. The Industry Pledge is a public statement that an organisation is committed to actions to support and increase the representation of women in trades.

# People experiencing domestic and family violence, or at risk of it, are safer

The Government is committed to responding to domestic and family violence and ensuring people experiencing it, or at risk of it, are safer. A whole of government approach is being taken to address and prevent domestic and family violence.

Key initiatives include:

## Staying Home Leaving Violence

The Government will provide \$5.6 million in 2015–16 to continue and expand the Staying Home Leaving Violence program, to reduce risk to women and children experiencing domestic and family violence and prevent their homelessness.

The program supports women and children to stay safely in their own home or home of their choice while the perpetrator is removed, resulting in reduced likelihood of displacement and disruption to children's educational, personal and social development.

Four additional locations will begin in 2015–16, bringing to 27 the total number of areas with Staying Home Leaving Violence programs.



## Start Safely

The Government is providing \$10.4 million to continue the Start Safely program, which provides short to medium term financial assistance (up to 24 months) for people escaping domestic and family violence who are at risk of homelessness.

In 2015–16 we expect Start Safely will support approximately 1,900 households, including 3,040 children. The vast majority of people accessing this program are women, with and without children.

Start Safely allows people escaping domestic and family violence to move rapidly from homelessness, or from temporary housing situations such as refuges, into stable housing in the private rental market.



By offering a time limited rental subsidy in conjunction with facilitated access to integrated support services, Start Safely clients are able to re-stabilise their situation and provide for their children while establishing long term sustainable tenancies. The current average length of support on Start Safely is 13 months.

A longitudinal study of Start Safely clients over the first three years of the program showed that 70 per cent of clients who had exited the program had not returned for further FACS housing assistance. Other findings include:

- seven per cent of current Start Safely households are Indigenous, with this proportion ranging between 10–30 per cent in the non-metropolitan regional Districts.
- 26 per cent of current Start Safely households are of CALD background, with four of the five Sydney Districts ranging from 50–63 per cent CALD households.

During April 2015, 99 households were approved (across the Districts) to receive assistance from Start Safely and 56 households found properties and began receiving a subsidy.

In total, 1,001 households received assistance through Start Safely during April 2015.

At the end of April 2015, the number of households currently receiving Start Safely was highest in South Western Sydney District (approximately 240 households), Western Sydney (approximately 170 households), followed by the Hunter New England District (approximately 135 households). Data as at end of April 2015.

## Domestic and family violence reforms

The Government is continuing the reform of domestic and family violence services under the *It Stops Here* reform framework.

### **Safer Pathways for the victims of the most serious violence and abuse**

The Government continues to support the expansion of Safer Pathway, a key element of *It Stops Here* with an investment of \$2.3 million in 2015–16. Safer Pathway is a new way of assessing safety, making referrals and coordinating services to ensure the victim's safety, health and wellbeing needs are met now and in the future.

Safer Pathway operates in two sites and will expand to encompass six sites in total in 2015–16.



### **Preventing violence**

As part of *It Stops Here* the Government is providing funding for four new men's behaviour change services across NSW. In 2015–16, \$1.8 million is being invested in this program which will work with male perpetrators to address and change their violent behaviour. The new men's services will also respond to the needs of women and children.

## Integrated Domestic and Family Violence Services

The Government is providing \$3.6 million in 2015–16 to continue the Integrated Domestic and Family Violence Services program to prevent the escalation of domestic and family violence among high risk groups.

The program operates in 10 locations across NSW and works with victims of domestic and family violence, including children, and provides referrals for perpetrators.

# Aboriginal people, families and communities have better outcomes

The Government is focused on ensuring Aboriginal children, young people and families have better outcomes. Key initiatives include:

## Housing for Aboriginal people in regional and remote areas

The Government will provide \$167.5 million in 2015–16 to deliver more housing for Aboriginal people in regional and remote areas, maintain current Aboriginal community housing and strengthen the Aboriginal housing sector. Two-thirds of this expenditure is allocated to regional and remote areas. The Aboriginal Housing Office (AHO) uses this funding to address severe overcrowding, homelessness, poor housing conditions and severe housing shortages in Indigenous communities, including:

- increased supply of safe and adequate housing
- implementation of tenancy management reforms consistent with public housing standards, including rent collection, tenant support, asset protection and strong governance arrangements
- ongoing programs for the repair and maintenance of remote Indigenous housing
- increased employment opportunities for residents in remote communities.

The funding will also assist the AHO with its continued work with over 200 Aboriginal Community Housing Providers across NSW to build capacity and develop their businesses.

## Repairing and maintaining dwellings in Aboriginal community housing

As part of the \$167.5 million funding, the Government will provide \$28.4 million in funding to repair and maintain dwellings in the Aboriginal community housing sector. A further \$16.2 million is for building capacity in the sector, direct grants, tenancy management assistance, and governance and registration activities.

## National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing

As a part of the \$167.5 million funding, \$46 million is allocated in 2015–16 under the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing (NPARIH) and through the Aboriginal Housing Office's own capital works program to deliver housing in regional and remote areas for Aboriginal people by building and/or acquiring safe and affordable dwellings.

The Government has successfully negotiated key variations to the scope of the NPARIH to better suit NSW conditions. In 2015–16, \$15.5 million will be spent on acquiring 30 new dwellings outside the NPARIH program, and \$22 million in NPARIH funding will be spent on constructing or acquiring 24 new dwellings and 10 employment and training related accommodation dwellings. A further \$8 million will be spent on upgrading existing AHO owned dwellings.



## Aboriginal Intensive Family Based Support

FACS will invest \$3.4 million in 2015–16 in Aboriginal NGOs providing Intensive Family Based Support. The Intensive Family Based Support program provides intensive, time-limited, home-based support to Aboriginal families in crisis (including extended family) whose children are either at risk of entering OOHC or are in OOHC and are due to be restored with their families.

FACS also currently directly operates six Intensive Family Based Support across NSW. Discussions will be held with key stakeholders to consider transitioning the internal FACS services to the Aboriginal NGO sector.

# New work for FACS in 2015–16

## Building community infrastructure

\$45.4 million for the Community Building Partnership program aims to provide improved community infrastructure and encourage community based activities that create more vibrant and inclusive communities.

## Creating vibrant and inclusive multicultural communities

Key initiatives will include:

- an additional \$2 million in grant funding to support programs to counter violent extremism
- \$12.4 million for community engagement grants to support intercultural projects and policy development and to ensure all government agencies follow multicultural principles which maximise the social and economic benefits of cultural diversity
- \$9 million to provide professional interpreting and translation services to ensure people have equal access to government and community services.





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