Media Release

Jenny Mikakos MLC
Minister for Families & Children
Minister for Youth Affairs

Friday, 27 February, 2015

WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITY SECTOR TO IMPROVE CARE OF VULNERABLE KIDS

Minister for Families and Children, Jenny Mikakos, today chaired the first meeting of the Committee appointed to help strengthen out-of-home care services for Victoria's most vulnerable children and young people.

The Ministerial Advisory Committee is made up of community sector leaders who have a wealth of experience in working with vulnerable children.

Its first task is to recommend strategies on how to recruit more foster carers and retain those already supporting children who have experienced abuse and neglect.

Out-of-home care is the care of vulnerable children by foster carers, kinship carers, or residential-care facilities operated by community services organisations and funded through the Department of Health and Human Services.

The Andrews Labor Government earlier this month announced $19 million of funding for the out-of-home-care system.

The Committee will also assist the Minister to develop strategies to reduce the high number of Aboriginal children in out-of-home care.

The Ministerial Advisory Committee will meet quarterly and will be chaired by Ms Mikakos. Committee members are listed on the next page.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Families and Children, Jenny Mikakos

"Our child protection system was in crisis under the Liberals. We have responded immediately with $19 million in funding, to help protect vulnerable children and young people."

"The Liberals weren't interested in working with the community sector. We are consulting the experts and getting their help in repairing Victoria's out-of-home care system."

"Foster carers are the unsung heroes of the out-of-home care system. They protect vulnerable children and we need to attract more people to these vital roles and support those who are already involved."

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Members of the Ministerial Advisory Committee

Aileen Ashford, CEO, Children's Protection Society
Muriel Bamblett, CEO, Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency
Grant Boyd, CEO, Bethany Community Support
Cathy Carnovale, State Co-ordinator, CREATE foundation
Micaela Cronin, CEO, MacKillop Family Services
Lisa Darmanin, Branch Executive President, Australian Services Union
Sandie de Wolf, CEO, Berry Street
Bronwyn Harcourt, Principal, Croydon Community School
Katie Hooper, CEO, Foster Care Association of Victoria
Rudolph Kirby, CEO, Mallee District Aboriginal Services
Vernon Knight, Executive Director, Mallee Family Care
Paul McDonald, CEO, Anglicare Victoria
Anne McLeish, Director, Grandparents Victoria
Peter Mulholland, General Manager, The Salvation Army, Westcare
Luke Rumbold, CEO, Upper Murray Family Care
Kelly Stanton, GM Services, Wesley Mission, Victoria
Lisa Sturzenegger, CEO, Oz Child
Deb Tsorbaris, CEO, Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare
Alan Wilson, CEO, Quantum Support Services

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