



Northern Territory

BUDGET 2004

Moving the Territory ahead... **less tax, more jobs, great lifestyle**

M E D I A R E L E A S E

Marion Scrymgour

Minister for Family & Community Services

18 May 2004

MORE FUNDS FOR FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Budget 2004 continues the Martin Labor Government commitment to putting Territory families first with \$44.8 million going to Family and Community Services.

This is an increase of \$3.6 million on last year.

“We recognise that the wellbeing of families is critical to the Territory’s future,” Family and Community Services Minister Marion Scrymgour said.

“The Martin Labor Government has already shown its commitment to families, children’s protection services in particular, through last year’s record injection of \$53 million into the system over the next five years.”

PUTTING TERRITORY FAMILIES FIRST

Our most valuable resource is our children and the Martin Labor Government is committed to ensuring they have the best start in life with strong support for families.

Budget 2004 includes:

- \$20 million for child protection services which will help employ more child protection and family support workers
- \$10.8 million for childcare, early childhood development and parent support services
- \$13.9 million for families in crisis, including \$600,000 towards new family support programs like the Parenting Helpline and Website, and \$595,000 in extra payments to foster carers

“There is no better way to invest in the Territory’s future than by giving children a good start in life, and these initiatives will help young Territorians for years to come,” Ms Scrymgour said.

RECORD FUNDS FOR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mental Health Services will receive a record boost in the Budget with \$25.8 million to be spent in 2004-05.

The Martin Labor Government recognises mental health is a priority area and recently announced a \$12.7 million injection of extra funding into the system over the next three years.

The additional funding will mean increased access to treatment and services.

Additional funding is already being used to appoint a Principal Psychiatrist and employ additional mental health workers across the Territory.



\$55 MILLION FOR AGED CARE AND DISABILITY SERVICES

In 2004-05 Aged and Disability Services will receive \$55.1 million.

This will include:

- \$8.2 million for supporting Senior Territorians and Pensioner Concessions
- \$46.9 million to support the frail, aged and those living with a disability. This includes \$1.2 million for improved services to people with a disability and their carers; and \$200,000 in Darwin and \$50,000 in Alice Springs for services to young people with disabilities, post secondary school
- a 24-hour Response Call Out Service for Darwin and Palmerston to provide an emergency response to crisis situations

“This funding is proof of our commitment to put Territory families first,” Ms Scrymgour said.

