



MEDIA RELEASE

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Outcomes for children about more than child protection

'VCOSS welcomes the Government's commitment to implementing the Ombudsman's recommendations around child protection, but this will not be enough to ensure vulnerable children and young people are properly protected,' said Cath Smith, Chief Executive Officer of the Victorian Council of Social Service (VCOSS).

'Even though Victoria has a leading policy framework for children and families, the Victorian Government has failed to adequately invest in preventing children, young people and families reaching crisis and experiencing trauma. Too often children, young people and families receive no support until they reach crisis, even though all the evidence demonstrates that early intervention is most effective.

Responsibility cannot solely be put on the shoulders of child protection or one Minister alone.

'What Victorians need are family violence, mental health, drug and alcohol and housing supports that are available when they need them, along with a whole of government focus on early intervention, whether that be at school or in early childhood, youth or family services.

'Victoria needs a robust and transparent child and family services system that has the best interests of children at its core. An independent Child Safety Commissioner providing a strong independent voice for children, along with improvements to Children's Court processes would be critical to this.

'The Ombudsman's report is a call to action to the Victorian Government and all Victorians to wake up and promote and protect the best interests of our children.'

VCOSS 2010-11 State Budget submission available at www.vcoass.org.au

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