



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Youth workers a positive first step

'VCOSS welcomes the 55 new youth workers announced yesterday as part of the law and order state budget initiatives,' said Cath Smith, Chief Executive Officer of VCOSS.

'VCOSS sees this initiative as a good down payment on an integrated government response to young people. We look forward to seeing the detail and working with the Government on implementing these initiatives.'

'An integrated government approach will help ensure that all young people in Victoria can achieve their full potential as the global financial crisis recedes. As noted by Dr Ken Henry, investing in the capabilities of young people delivers significant benefits for Australia's future prosperity.'

'VCOSS has called for the Government to invest in youth services in next week's State Budget. Youth services play a key role in supporting the health and wellbeing of young people, helping to keep them on track in their education and employment. For too long the Government has ignored the importance of youth services – in last year's State Budget, youth affairs funding decreased by 7.9% in real terms.'

'VCOSS will be looking for additional investment beyond this down payment to support better outcomes for young people in next week's Budget, particularly:

- Investment in early intervention generalist youth services;
- Ongoing funding for the Youth Referral and Independent Person Program;
- Increasing investment in supports for same sex-attracted and transgender youth support services, with training for education and youth professionals;
- Increasing targeted support for young people through Community Legal Centres, particularly those in rural and regional Victoria; and
- Improving access to VET for young people.

#### VCOSS

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