



Budget 2009-10

Investing in Jobs

YOUTH

Investing in young people for the future

Young people will benefit from a share of \$15.66 million in funding for youth programs and other support services as part of the NSW Budget.

Minister for Youth Graham West said the NSW Government is investing \$3.9 million in *Better Futures*, a Department of Community Services program that aims to keep young people aged nine to 18 connected to education, their communities and families as they progress to adulthood.

"Better Futures is an early support program that specifically aims to reduce risk, reinforce protective behaviours and create opportunities for young people to achieve successful futures," Mr West said.

"Services focus on youth participation, keeping young people in school, and improving educational outcomes.

"Better Futures helps ensure young people are well supported along this path and have every chance to develop into healthy adults.

"This Government is also allocating \$11.76 million to the Commission for Children and Young People - to enable the expansion of Working With Children Checks, spot-checking of volunteers' Prohibited Employment Declarations and a new program to assist employers to be more child safe and child friendly.

"The NSW Government is responding to strong evidence about the best ways to keep children safe in workplaces.

"Around 34,000 additional Working With Children background checks will also be carried out on new groups recommended by the Wood report; including foster carers and family day carers, volunteers providing personal care to children with disabilities and mentoring to high risk children, child well-being units, and students on placement at DoCS.

"Further, spot checks will be conducted on volunteer organisations to encourage strong compliance with Prohibited Employment Declarations and help prevent prohibited people from working with kids.

"The NSW Government is committed to protecting the children and young people of NSW and recognises that this is a shared responsibility," Mr West said.

