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Media Release

Therapeutic approach a step in the right direction

MacKillop Family Services welcomes the release of the Victorian Government's Out-of-Home Care Five Year Plan, as part of Victoria's Vulnerable Children Strategy.

MacKillop supports the expansion of therapeutic approaches in out-of-home care, as this is critical to providing safety and promoting healing for children and young people who have experienced trauma and abuse.

"We particularly applaud the commitment to making 100 per cent of residential care placements therapeutic within the next five years," said MacKillop Family Services Acting CEO Gerard Jones. "We have been advocating for investment in this area as there is strong evidence that therapeutic residential care provides better outcomes for children and young people."

The plan proposes a significant reform in how services for children and young people in out-of-home care are organised and funded. MacKillop supports the focus on local and flexible service responses to improve outcomes for children and young people.

"Community services organisations in Victoria have a strong history of collaboration and innovation. MacKillop looks forward to building on our work with other organisations and government to provide more flexible responses, to ensure the right supports reach the right children and their families at the right time," Mr Jones said.

The plan correctly prioritises a comprehensive response to the over-representation of Aboriginal children and young people in out-of-home care. MacKillop welcomes the leadership to be provided in this area by Andrew Jackomos, the Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People.

"The areas of early intervention, improving education outcomes and leaving care are challenges in out-of-home care. The plan identifies these as priorities, however they lack the investment and initiatives that are evident elsewhere in the plan," said Mr Jones.

While MacKillop believes the plan is significant step forward in improving out-of-home care, its success relies on all parties working with vulnerable children and young people to turn its promise into reality.

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