



MEDIA RELEASE

13 MAY 2008

FAMILY FOCUS DOES NOT GO FAR ENOUGH

Family Relationship Services Australia, the national peak body for the family relationships sector, welcomes the Government's focus on families in the 2008 Federal Budget.

The Government has recognised that many families are doing it tough and honoured important election promises. There are a number of elements in the 'Working Families Support Package' that will be welcome. In particular:

- Income tax relief
- The Education Tax Refund
- Increases to the Child Care Tax Rebate
- Action on Housing Affordability
- Changes to the Medicare Levy Surcharge
- Increased support for Carers

"The weakness in this budget is that it does not use the savings generated from targeting family payments such as the Baby Bonus and Family Tax Benefit B, to substantially increase investment in support services for those families in real need. Community organisations across Australia are struggling to keep up with the demand for services that provide essential support to families", said Samantha Page, Executive Director.

"There is much more to be done to achieve social inclusion and address disadvantage. We had hoped that the Budget would deliver more investment in these areas."

"We remain committed to working with the Government on key priorities including the National Protection Framework and the Emergency Intervention in the Northern Territory. There is a need to balance the crisis response strategies, such as income management, with investment in effective services that strengthen families and support parents. We need to build the safety net around children at risk to identify them sooner and intervene earlier. Community organisations that are embedded in their local area are best placed to build relationships with families before issues occur or become a crisis."

-ENDS-

FRSA Media Contact: Bonnie Montgomery, 02 6162 1811 or 0406 628 239

Family Relationship Services Australia is the national peak body for over 100 family relationship service providers, operating in more than 400 locations across Australia. FRSA's vision is for an Australian society that is enriched through respectful relationships in all their diversity.