

Talking Points

- Explain to your MP why these issues are important to you and the people and communities that you work with
- Talk them through the PBS recommendations – what is the issue and how these would make a difference in your electorate – see key points and stats below, and specific stats for [each region on our website](#)
- Provide your MP with a copy of the [NCOSS Pre-Budget Submission](#)
- If they need any further info you are not sure of get in contact with Ola Hamed at ola@ncoss.org.au

Ask your MP to commit to supporting the campaign by:

- Get a photo of yourself and your MP with a copy of the PBS. (Don't forget to send it to us!)
- Speaking in local media about how these policy changes would make a real difference for the people in your community
- Advocating for the Government to adopt these recommendations in the next Budget
 - *Coalition MPs* – advocating within the party room and to their colleagues in the party (including relevant Ministers and the Premier) on the importance of these recommendations for the members of their electorate
 - *ALP/ Greens/ Independents MPs* – advocating to Government regarding the difference these recommendations would make for people and communities experiencing poverty and disadvantage across the State. Asking questions of the Government regarding the rates of people experiencing poverty and their willingness to adopt these recommendations.

Give all children and young people the best start in life:

All children deserve the best start in life. However, too many of our children and young people experience poverty, violence, poor health and disadvantage. We know whole-of-family, whole-of-community approaches that provide early, targeted support deliver the best and most effective outcomes. We need to build and support safe, resilient families and communities so children can grow and thrive.

Recommendation: Establish a \$250 million Early Childhood Education Investment Fund to ensure vulnerable children access the full benefits of quality early education.

Invest \$3.5 million to fund the delivery of child-centred, trauma informed services targeting children and young people who are victims or have experienced domestic and family violence.

Invest an additional \$39 million in childhood obesity prevention with a focus on equitable access and opportunities in regional and remote NSW.

Create homes for our most vulnerable:

We all need a place to call home. Without a safe, secure home, people cannot work towards a better life for themselves and their families. But across NSW there is a chronic shortage of affordable housing, with an estimated shortfall of at least 130,000 dwellings³ and rental affordability is at an all-time low. The waitlist for social housing continues to grow and people are being forced to move away from services and opportunities, or live in conditions that fall well below basic human rights.

Recommendation: Allocate an additional \$97 million over four years to create homes that meet the needs of people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Allocate \$45 million over four years toward developing at least five youth foyer models across NSW.

Invest \$22 million in new housing models for older women.

Commit \$30 million over four years toward a Housing First response to people experiencing chronic homelessness.

Make energy more affordable:

Energy use underpins all aspects of our daily lives. While high energy prices affect households across NSW, the stark reality for people living below the poverty line is that rising bills are impacting their health, wellbeing and quality of life. We know that 19% of children living in low-income households are going without food, and 33% of low-income households are going without medical treatment in order to pay their energy bills. They are sacrificing hot water for bathing, not heating their homes, and going to bed early in an effort to reduce their costs.

Recommendation: Invest an additional \$39 million in 2018/19 to reform energy rebates and deliver a single, expanded Low Income Household Energy Rebate equivalent to 17.5% of eligible household's electricity bills.

Boost support for people with mental health issues:

Good mental healthcare and wellbeing enables us to lead healthier lives, cope with the stresses of life more effectively and realise our full potential. But getting the right support at the right time is often out of reach for too many people living with poverty and disadvantage. Across NSW we heard key barriers include the rising cost of healthcare, a shortage of mental health workers and the persistent stigma around mental health issues.

Recommendation: Invest \$25 million over four years to expand the mental health peer workforce and support people at specific 'pressure points' in the mental healthcare system.

Build a fair justice system for Aboriginal communities:

Our Aboriginal communities are vibrant and diverse, with strong connections to community and country. Empowering these communities is key to addressing the challenges they continue to experience in health, education, employment, and the justice system. In particular, systemic barriers mean that Aboriginal people across our state are still 13 times more likely to go to prison than non-Aboriginal people. Shockingly, if they are under the age of 18 years, they are 15 times more likely.⁵ There are concerns a tipping point has been reached where imprisonment has become normalised, threatening the viability of our Aboriginal communities and their youth.

Recommendation: Invest \$44 million over four years to help Aboriginal communities reduce contact with the justice system:

Invest an additional \$24.4 million over four years in community-based Aboriginal legal assistance services.

Commit \$4 million over four years to reducing young Aboriginal people's contact with the criminal justice system.

Invest \$15.6 million over four years in culturally appropriate post-release programs, focusing on continuity of support to re-establish connection to community and reduce re-offending.

Financially empower women throughout their life cycle:

Financial security and literacy empowers us to access life's essentials, opportunities, and freedom of choice. But systemic workforce issues mean women are generally concentrated in sectors and occupations that pay less and are less secure. Their careers are also more likely to be interrupted due to caring responsibilities. These tendencies compound into financial disadvantage across their life, resulting in lower superannuation levels and retirement savings, and a greater risk of poverty and disadvantage than men.

Recommendation: Invest an additional \$7.8 million over three years in the delivery of the Financial Counselling Services Program and gender-specific material to better assist vulnerable women.

Give a voice to all people with disability:

We all want the opportunity to fulfil our potential. The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is a huge and positive reform, giving people choice and control over their disability supports. But we know that only 10% of people with disability will be eligible for NDIS packages. We also heard right across the state that people with disability need information and active assistance from advocates outside the NDIS to help them take control of their lives and have a voice in shaping policy. This is particularly important given one in four of the households experiencing poverty that we spoke to had someone with a disability. It is also vital for Aboriginal people and communities to have advocates who understand their culture and community, and are easy to access face-to-face.

Recommendation: Invest \$13 million to maintain funding beyond June 2018 to organisations providing representation, advocacy and information to people with disability and their families.