Dominic Perrottet
Premier of NSW

Matt Kean
Treasurer
Minister for Energy and Environment

Sarah Mitchell
Minister for Education and Early Learning

Brad Hazzard
Minister for Health

Victor Dominello
Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government

Natasha Mclaren-Jones
Minister for Families and Communities

MEDIA RELEASE

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A BRIGHTER BEGINNING FOR ALL NSW CHILDREN

A life-changing package for NSW children and families has been announced today with a $376.5 million investment over four years in child development and family support as part of the 2022-23 NSW Budget.

Premier of NSW Dominic Perrottet said the Brighter Beginnings package will provide all children with a full suite of developmental checks before they start school and make the baby blue book digital.

“The first 2,000 days of a child’s life are critical to their development and success and we want to ensure they get the best start possible,” Mr Perrottet said.

“NSW is now leading the nation in providing the best developmental support giving families right across the state the brightest of futures.”

Treasurer Matt Kean said that 90 per cent of a child’s brain development happens before the age of five, which is why these reforms are so important for NSW’s future prosperity.

“This is a long-term investment which will reap benefits for children, families and the economy today, and for many generations to come,” Mr Kean said

As the Minister leading the initiative, Minister for Education and Early Learning Sarah Mitchell said it’s clear that getting it right early in a child’s life has lifelong benefits for their future.

“Almost half of all 4-year-old children do not get their recommended health and development checks, so making these available in every NSW early childhood service will open the door to brighter futures for thousands of children,” Ms Mitchell said.

“The Brighter Beginnings initiative will also make a huge difference to outcomes at school, from behaviour to academic results.”

“Knowing where children are developmentally and physically before they start school is so important, allowing any necessary support to be identified.”

Minister for Health Brad Hazzard said expanding the home-based antenatal service would make it easier for parents to access important health care information.

“We are bringing the Sustaining NSW Families program to more Local Health District across the state, so many more vulnerable families can be supported by free home visits by a specially trained clinical nurse,” Mr Hazzard said.

Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government Victor Dominello said making the Blue Book digital will make it easier for families to access and keep track of their child’s health and development information.

“This initiative is modernising how we support families at a critical time in their child’s life,” Mr Dominello said.

Minister for Families and Communities Natasha Maclaren-Jones said that more Aboriginal Child and Family Centres will help connect families with a mix of culturally safe services and supports for their child’s development.

“Expansion of the Pregnancy Family Conferencing program will mean more vulnerable families will be able to access early engagement and interagency care planning, so they can remain together,” Ms Maclaren-Jones said.

The Brighter Beginnings initiative is a partnership, led by Minister Mitchell, between the Department of Education, NSW Health, the Department of Communities and Justice, the Department of Customer Service, the Department of Regional NSW, Multicultural NSW, Aboriginal Affairs, and the Department of Premier and Cabinet to drive transformational change in early childhood development.

Alongside the NSW Government’s Affordable Preschool Program, the Brighter Beginnings package includes:

- $111.2 million to bring health and development checks to all children in NSW preschool settings in partnership with health professionals;
- $98.7 million to continue and expand the number of Aboriginal Child and Family Centres across the state;
- $70.9 million to expand the transformational Sustaining NSW Families clinical nurse home visiting program;
- $57.2 million to develop the clinical interface of the Digital Baby Book; and
- $38.6 million to make Pregnancy Family Conferencing available to more parents across NSW.

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