

\$11.2 billion a year: The cost of violence against children and young people in NSW

New research published by ACYP and highlights the severity and consequences of violence against children and young people

Thursday 20th June 2019: The Office of the NSW Advocate for Children and Young People (ACYP) released a report that estimates violence against children and young people costs NSW \$11.2 billion annually.

Every day in NSW children and young people – as some of the most vulnerable members of our community – suffer physical, sexual and emotional violence in settings that should be places of safety. According to the report, *The Economic Cost of Violence Against Children and Young People*, which ACYP commissioned Deloitte Access Economics to undertake, there were 154,302 estimated cases of violence against children and young people in NSW in one year alone.

The report, which focuses solely on violence against children and young people aged 0-24, using the figures from 2016-2017, reveals that violence against children not only impacts on their lives but also has a tremendous economic impact on New South Wales:

- Violence against children and young people costs NSW \$11.2 billion annually
- \$2.3 billion of this is borne by NSW health, education child protection, housing and justice systems directly
- \$8.2 billion is borne by individuals and the broader community and \$600 million by the Federal Government

“Every act of violence against children and young people causes enormous physical, sexual or psychological damage, however this report outlines the magnitude of violence against children and young people from a financial perspective,” said Andrew Johnson, the NSW Advocate for Children and Young People.

The report seeks to understand the long-lasting impact violence has on children and young people who experience it and includes the costs to individuals, to health, education, family and community services and housing budgets as well as productivity. By investigating the economic costs for the government, people and the community, it serves as a reminder that we need to redouble our efforts to ensure that children are free from violence; failure to act to act will result in significant costs to individuals as well as to the community.

The campaign was borne out of extensive consultations with thousands of children and young people in NSW carried out by ACYP since 2015, in which they continually named violence as a major issue for them. A key recommendation was the development of a campaign targeting adults to address their concerns.

“Children and young people told us they needed adults to stand up and say out loud that violence perpetrated against them is just plain wrong. We know from the testimony of thousands of witnesses at the Royal Commission, that their voices were not heard. In light of this, our job is to listen more, trust more and start systematising the voices of children and young people at all levels and act upon their concerns.”

“There is already strong recognition of the importance of this issue by the NSW government reflected in its reform agenda, but this is not a problem the government alone can fix. It needs to be embraced as a mainstream issue by every single one of us. To help achieve that, it is essential that we fully understand the scale of the economic losses it causes.”

As part of the ongoing NSW End Violence against Children *Now and Forever* campaign, ACYP is urging Australian adults to show their commitment to ending violence against children and young people by taking action and signing the pledge today at <https://www.nowandforever.nsw.gov.au/pledge>.

ENDS

To download the Report and for more information on the NSW End Violence Against Children campaign please visit www.nowandforever.nsw.gov.au/

For more information on the NSW Advocate for Children and Young People please visit www.acyp.nsw.gov.au

**For more information and/or to arrange an interview please contact:
Sara Sweet, Senior Communications Adviser at ACYP on 0439 346 249**