2019-20 Public Accounts and Estimates Committee Budget Estimates Hearing
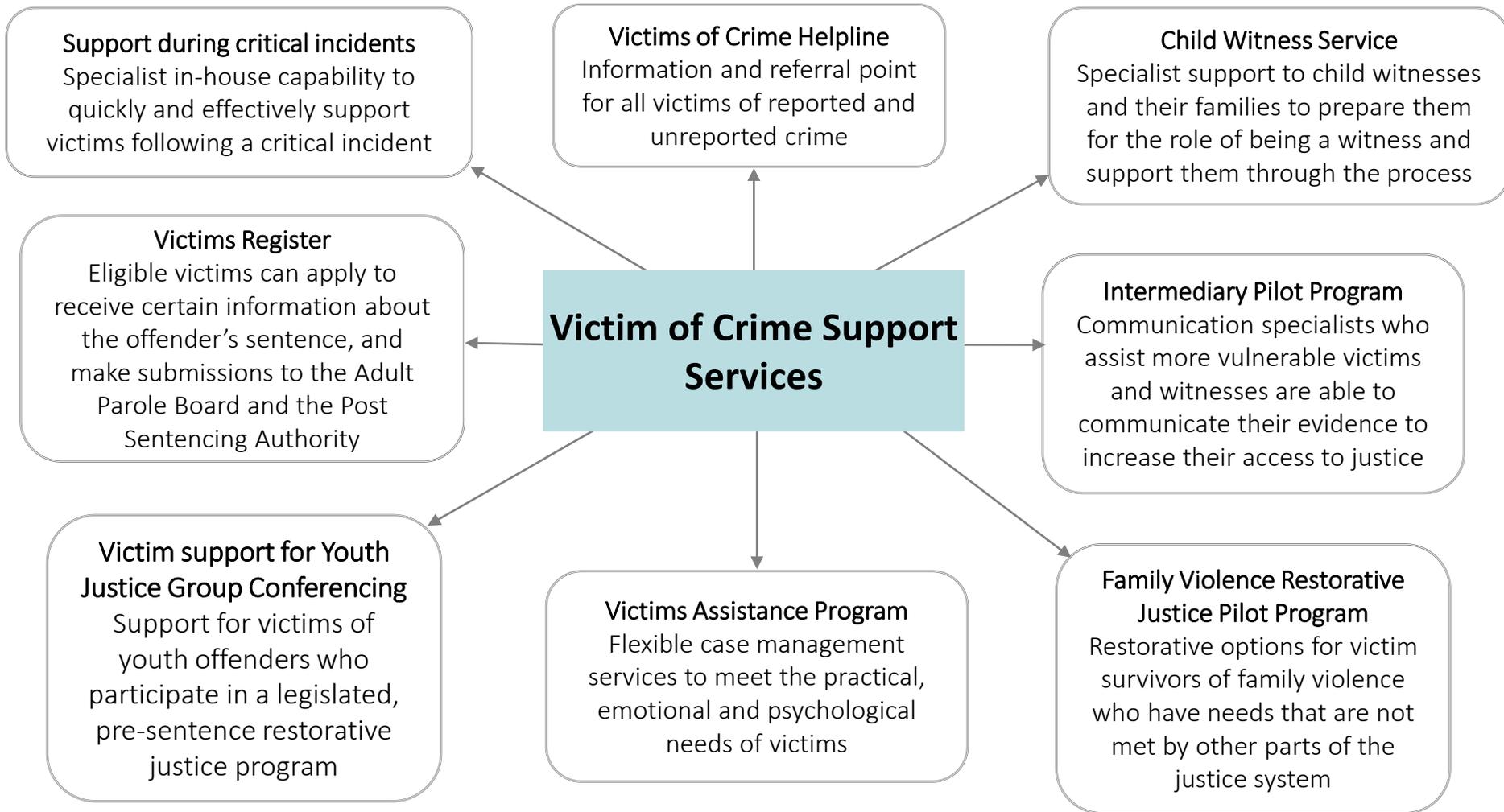
The Hon. Ben Carroll MP
Minister for Victim Support

Victim Support Budget Overview

- **$3.2 million** over three years invested to progress reforms to financial assistance for victims of crime.

- Budgeted output funding for Victims Support agency is **$26.5 million in 2019-20**, up from **$14.8 million in 2014-15.**

Victim of crime support services

Support during critical incidents
Specialist in-house capability to quickly and effectively support victims following a critical incident

Victims of Crime Helpline
Information and referral point for all victims of reported and unreported crime

Child Witness Service
Specialist support to child witnesses and their families to prepare them for the role of being a witness and support them through the process

Victims Register
Eligible victims can apply to receive certain information about the offender's sentence, and make submissions to the Adult Parole Board and the Post Sentencing Authority

Victim of Crime Support Services

Intermediary Pilot Program
Communication specialists who assist more vulnerable victims and witnesses are able to communicate their evidence to increase their access to justice

Victim support for Youth Justice Group Conferencing
Support for victims of youth offenders who participate in a legislated, pre-sentence restorative justice program

Victims Assistance Program
Flexible case management services to meet the practical, emotional and psychological needs of victims

Family Violence Restorative Justice Pilot Program
Restorative options for victim survivors of family violence who have needs that are not met by other parts of the justice system

Delivering on our commitments –Support for victims of crime

- **2017-18 Budget Initiatives of $28.5 million**

  - **Boosted the number of frontline staff and support services for victims, witnesses and vulnerable children**
  - Increased the number of social workers in the Office of Public Prosecutions to support victims before and during trials
  - Established the Intermediary Pilot Program.

- **2018-19 Budget Initiatives of $17 million**

  - Boosted the Victims Assistance Program, the Victims of Crime Helpline and other support workers
  - Extended the Intermediary Pilot Program.
  - Enhanced the capacity of the Child Witness Service.

Delivering on our commitments –Support for victims of crime

- **Introduction of new laws to strengthen rights in the *Victims' Charter Act 2006* and expand the role of the Victims of Crime Commissioner**

- **Introduced the Intermediary Pilot Program and the Family Violence Restorative Justice Program**

- **Victoria joined the National Redress Scheme for institutional child sexual abuse.**

2019-20 Budget Initiatives

Reforms to financial assistance for victims of crime

- $3.2 million over three years to establish a reform team

- Government has accepted in principle all 100 recommendations of the VLRC's review

- Work will commence to reform the scheme to ensure it aligns with best-practice and makes access to financial assistance fast, fair and equitable

- Moves the scheme from courts to an administrative scheme, broadens eligibility and categories of assistance and simplifies the application process.