

Public Accounts and Estimates Committee 2015-16 Budget Estimates Hearing

Jenny Mikakos MP

Minister for Families & Children

2015-16 Budget – Overview

The *2015-16 Victorian Budget* is focussed on:

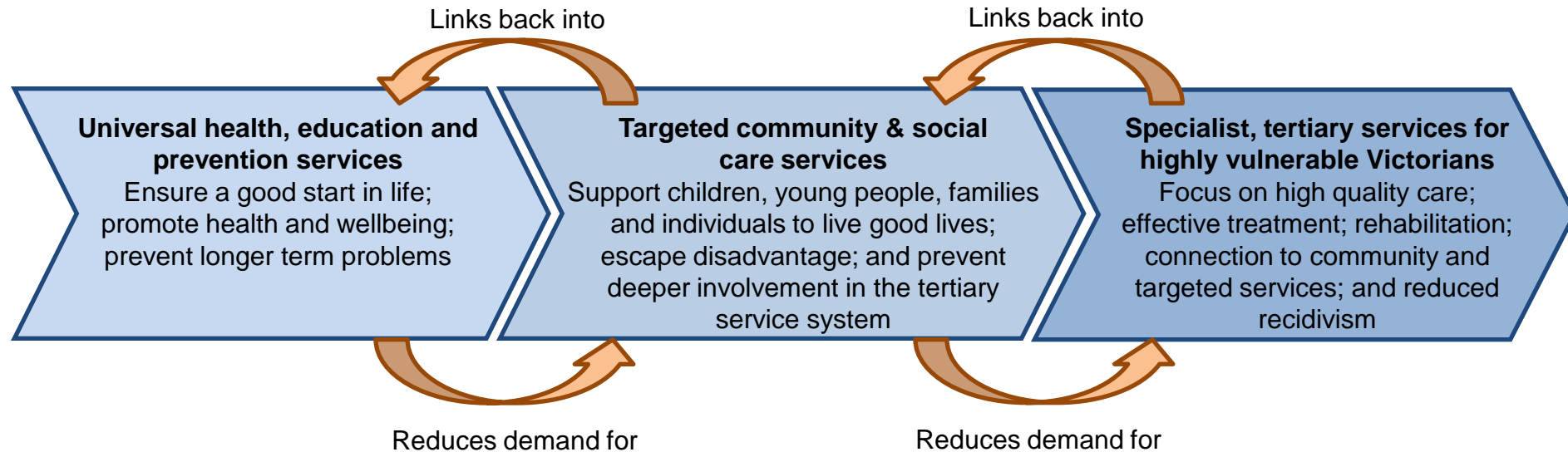
- Putting Victorian families first by investing in the services they depend on
- Addressing demand for core services
- Setting the stage for reform
- Delivering election commitments.



Families and Children Portfolio

Combining the Department of Education & Training and Department of Health & Human Services families and children services into one portfolio:

- enables a systematic approach to prevention and early intervention
- provides improved access to the full suit of services available, ensuring the best opportunities in life.



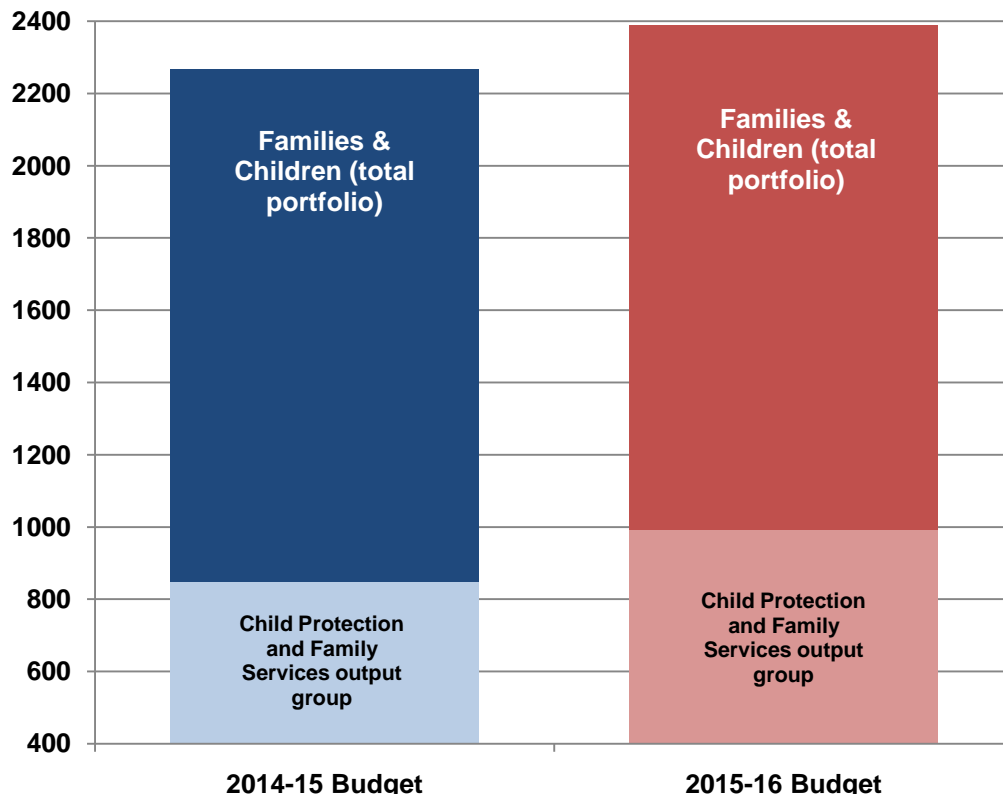
Early Childhood Education (DET)

The DHHS Ministerial portfolios lead Victoria's response to disadvantage. Integration, coordination and cooperation across government and with the community and community services is essential to making a lasting impact.

2015-16 Budget highlights

Major investment, including the biggest funding boost to services for vulnerable Victorian children and families in a decade

Child Protection and Family Services output group
(\$ million)



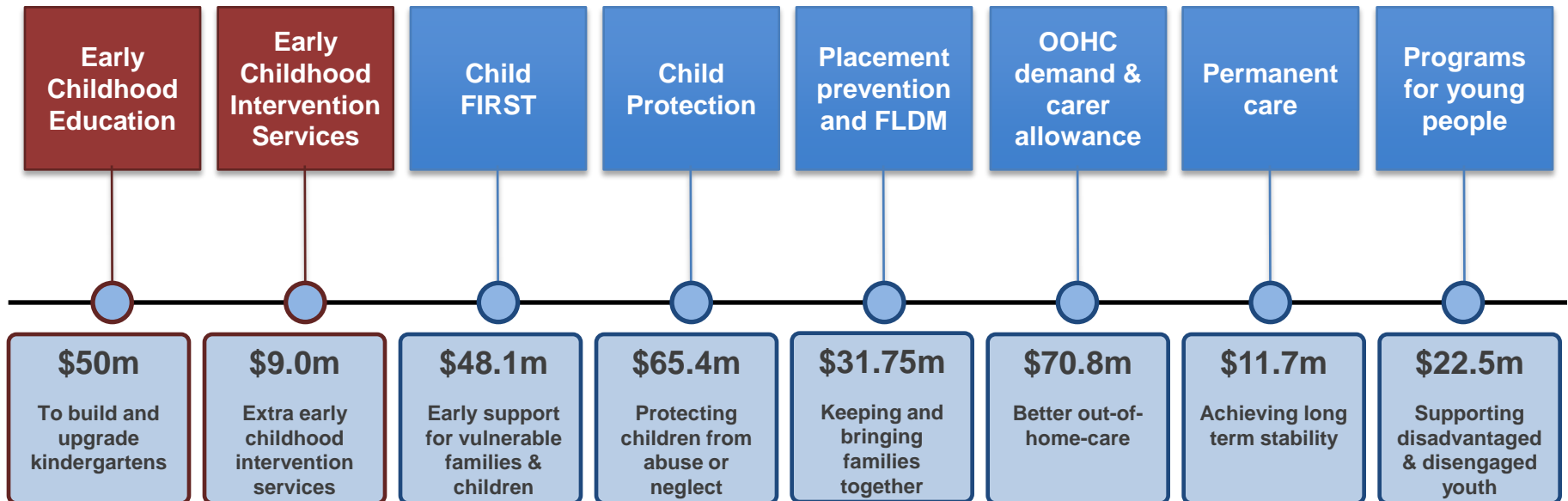
\$615 million over 5 years in additional funding for the Families & Children portfolio as a whole

\$257 million over 4 years in additional funding for Child Protection, Out-of-home Care and Family Services

A 17 per cent increase over the 2014-15 Budget for Child Protection & Family Services in 2015-16

2015-16 Budget highlights

A \$309 million investment across the lives of families and children plus \$10.2 million to respond to family violence.
New funding across the service continuum



2015-16 Budget highlights

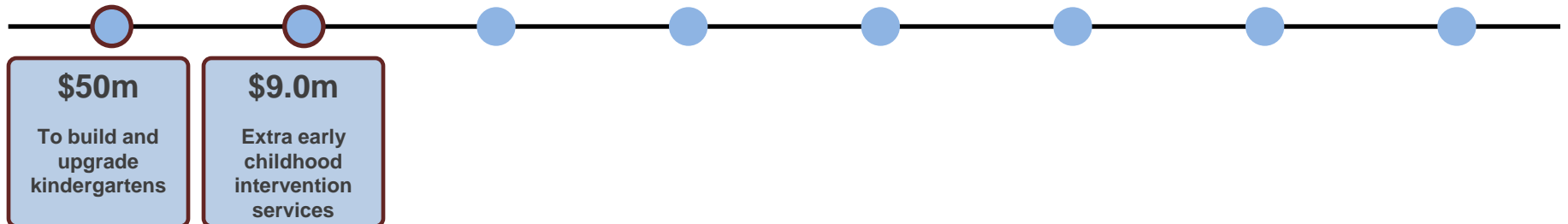
Early childhood education and care: Ensuring a good start and support where it is needed

\$50 million in kinder capital grants

- new and refurbished kinders
- more integrated children's centres.

\$9 million for Early Childhood Intervention Services

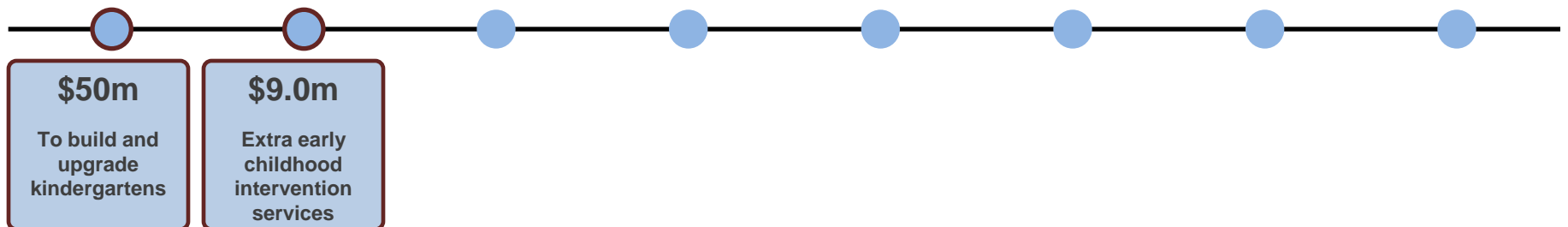
- continuation of 150 essential early childhood intervention services places, and 150 flexible support packages.



2015-16 Budget highlights

Early childhood: Looking ahead

- The Victorian Government will continue to strongly urge the Commonwealth to provide **ongoing funding** for 15 hours of four-year-old kindergarten.
- We are seeking further details regarding the Commonwealth announcement to **provide clarity regarding 2016 funding arrangements**.
- The Government is working on **a range of new initiatives** to support Victoria's transformation into the Education State. The early years will be a core part of this agenda.
- Over the coming months, this Government will work with the community to **co-design a long-term reform agenda** to make Victoria the Education State.

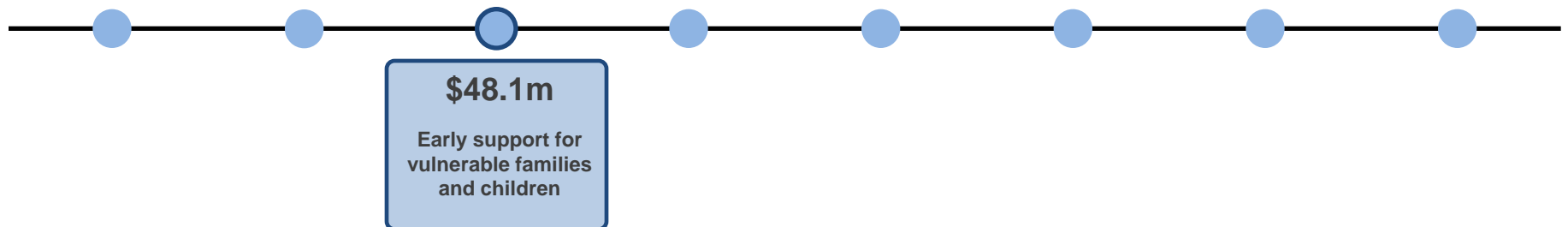


2015-16 Budget highlights

Early intervention for vulnerable children and families

\$48.1 million to ChildFIRST and Family Services:

- employing **70 additional CSO workers**
- assisting more than **2,100 vulnerable families** each year
- **\$2.25 million** per annum – for flexible funding packages.



2015-16 Budget highlights

**\$81.3 million over five years, across government
to address family violence**

In the Families and Children portfolio \$10.2 million over five years for:

- **\$3.9 million** - Child protection flexible responses
- **\$3.5 million** - Counselling services for children and women
- **\$1.0 million** - Men's family violence services
- **\$0.9 million** - Personal safety pilot
- **\$0.5 million** - Ballarat Centre Against Sexual Assault.
- **\$0.3 million** - Sexual assault services
- **\$0.1 million** - Pet welfare



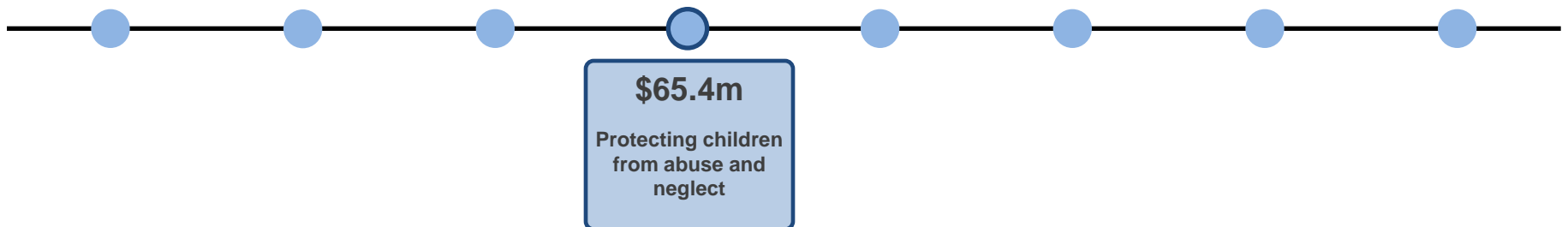
Responding to family violence

2015-16 Budget highlights

Protecting children from abuse and neglect

\$65.4 million for child protection:

- **88 additional child protection workers** to meet demand pressures
- **4 specialised child protection workers** to improve responses to the sexual exploitation of children in State care
- **19 additional** after hours workers to extend after-hours outreach capacity statewide for the first time.

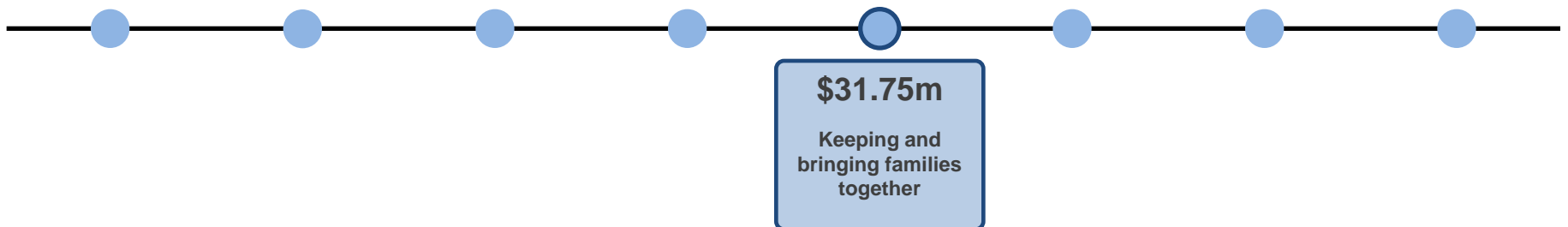


2015-16 Budget highlights

Keeping and bringing families together

\$31.75 million to keep families together and reunite children with their parents from out-of-home care:

- **\$9.2 million** - continuation of the Family Led Decision Making program
- **\$20.8 million** - expansion of programs targeting placement prevention and reunification across the State
- **\$1.75 million** - improving support for vulnerable Aboriginal children and families.



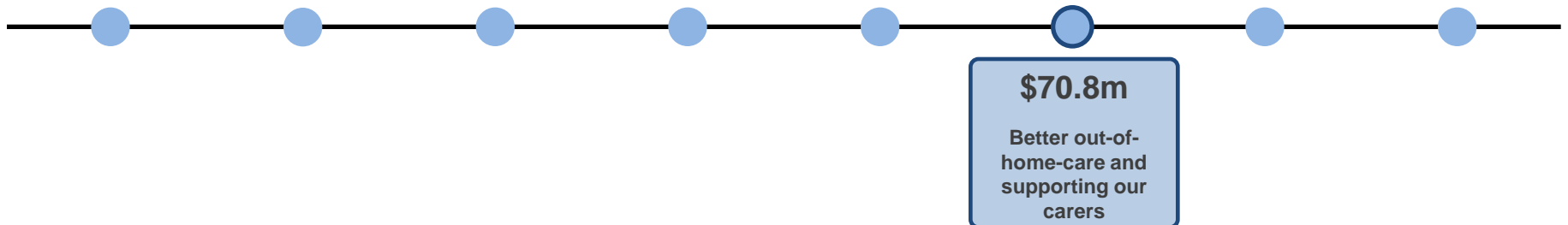
2015-16 Budget highlights

Better out-of-home care and supporting our carers

\$70.8 million to meet the cost of rising placement demand:

- **\$39.4 million** - addressing out of home care demand
- **\$31.4 million** - improving financial support for carers

Consultation with carers and other stakeholders to simplify and streamline the current carer allowance regime ahead of increased allowances from 1 January 2016.

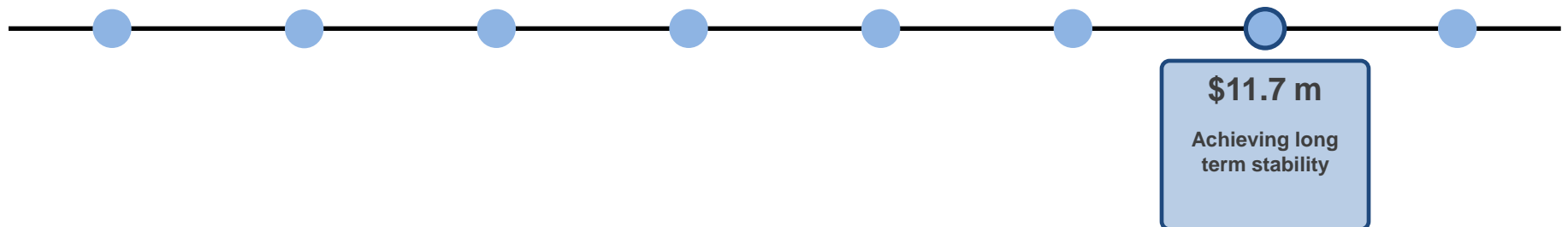


2015-16 Budget highlights

Achieving long term stability – permanent care

\$11.7 million to strengthen planning and support for children who are transitioning to permanent care:

- **\$3.4 million** - 24 Child Protection practitioners to support legislative changes commencing March 2016
- **\$8.3 million** - flexible funding packages to support transition to permanent care.

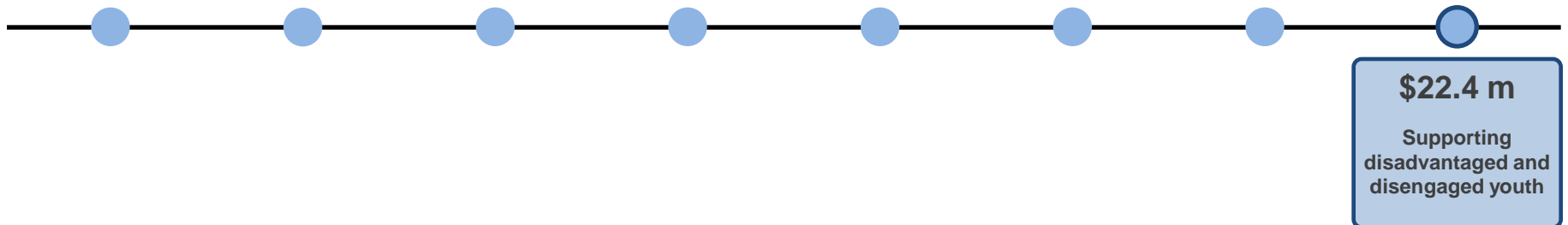


2015-16 Budget highlights

Supporting disadvantaged and disengaged youth

\$22.4 million to support disadvantaged and disengaged youth:

- **\$21.3 million** – continuation of Springboard for young people leaving care
- **\$1.1 million** – continuation of the youth justice intensive bail supervision program



2015-16 Budget highlights

Other funding for services for vulnerable Victorians

\$7.2 million over four years to continue the Good Money hubs in Geelong, Dandenong and Collingwood. Funding for these services was due to lapse at the end of 2014-15

\$934.9 million over four years to fund the Social and Community Services Equal Remuneration Order, demonstrating the Government's commitment to pay equity for workers providing vital services to vulnerable Victorians

