

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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YFS Calls for Action: Increased Funding Needed to Meet Legal Service Demands Amid National Cabinet's Commitment

YFS acknowledges the recent announcement by the [National Cabinet](#) and welcomes the Federal Government's commitment to increase funding to the legal services sector. However, while the additional funding is a step in the right direction, it falls short of addressing the growing demand for legal services in our community.

YFS operates Logan's only community legal centre, providing crucial legal support to vulnerable individuals and families in Logan, Beenleigh, Jimboomba, and surrounding areas. Our services include youth justice representation, duty lawyer services, general legal advice, outreach programs, and community legal education. Despite the increase in funding, YFS Legal is still experiencing significant strain, with more than 1,000 clients turned away last financial year due to limited resources.

YFS Legal is facing a high demand for its services, having supported 1,843 individuals in the 2023-24 financial year alone. Despite our best efforts, the current level of funding is insufficient to meet the growing needs of the community, resulting in increased wait times for clients. Our team remains committed to providing timely and effective legal assistance, but the limited resources mean we are unable to reach everyone who needs our help.

We urge the National Cabinet to engage in further consultation with community legal centres to ensure that funding allocations align with the actual demand for services. The additional funding announced is welcome but must be distributed in a manner that addresses the critical shortfall in resources.

Christopher John, CEO of YFS, stated, "While we appreciate the Federal Government's recognition of the legal sector's importance, we are concerned that the current funding is not sufficient to meet the needs of our community. Our 3.5 legal practitioners worked with over 1,800 clients last year assisting them in a variety of legal matters, but we were not able to provide support to all of those that sought our help. More support is needed to ensure that vulnerable individuals have access to justice."

Candice Hughes, Principal Solicitor at YFS Legal, added, "Our team is dedicated to providing essential legal services, but the high demand and limited resources have resulted in unavoidable delays. We call on the National Cabinet to engage with community legal centres to develop a more comprehensive funding strategy."

YFS is uniquely focused on providing local, integrated services that help to address the root causes of youth offending and ensure justice for victims, particularly for vulnerable groups like Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

YFS Legal offers free legal assistance to those in need, including victim-survivors of family violence, people experiencing homelessness, First Nations people, parents resolving family law matters, and individuals affected by floods and bushfires. We also support those facing workplace harassment, low-income renters, and people needing financial counselling. A major part of our work involves frontline domestic and family violence prevention and response.

By addressing broader issues leading to crime and disadvantage, we aim to help individuals make positive changes and reduce reoffending. **However, to keep offering this support, we need funding that matches the community's needs.**

We urge the Federal, State, and Territory governments to prioritise additional funding for community legal centres and ensure that future funding arrangements provide the necessary support to meet the community's legal needs. YFS Legal is prepared to work closely with all levels of government to develop strategies that ensure access to justice for all.

– ENDS –

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Available for Interview:

- Christopher John, CEO, YFS
- Candice Hughes, Principal Solicitor, YFS Legal

Photo and Filming Opportunity:

Photo and filming opportunities can be arranged on request.

About YFS

YFS is a community services organisation. For more than 39 years, YFS has worked with people in Logan and surrounding areas to help them not just to overcome adversity, but to thrive. Through a range of programs and services including legal services, housing, domestic violence services, family support, youth service, employment mentoring and financial counselling, we work with people to improve their circumstances and build their capacity for independence and participation.

For more information about YFS visit www.yfs.org.au.