



2021 WOMEN'S BUDGET STATEMENT

This publication was written
and launched on the land of
the Ngunnawal and Ngambri
People of the Canberra Region.

We pay our respect to
elders past and present,
and recognise them as the
custodians of the land.

FOREWORD

We're only in May, but 2021 has already proved an historic year for Australian women.

The bravery of women like Grace Tame and Brittany Higgins, of Chanel Contos and Saxon Mullins, has begun a national reckoning over sexual assault and the mistreatment of women. These women refused to be silenced – and they've inspired thousands of others to raise their voices.

The crowds supporting them around Australia have been diverse, but their demands are clear. Australian women are demanding justice, respect, and an equal voice when decisions are made.

Unfortunately, the current federal government does not give women an equal voice.

This Liberal government began its time in office with just one woman in a cabinet of nineteen. Since then, it's fought tooth and nail to block any reform that would increase female political representation, while bullying Liberal women out of the parliament.

Almost half of Labor party Senators and Members of Parliament are women, but only about a quarter of Coalition MPs and Senators.

That means poorer policies for all Australian women.

Last year, in the middle of a global pandemic and economic recession, the federal budget showed no meaningful measures to address the problems facing Australian women, either at work, in the family, or in retirement. Female Liberal Members of Parliament were forced to defend the budget by claiming road funding was a women's measure – because women drive on roads too!

After the widespread panning of last year's budget, Scott Morrison is trying to show that he's finally learned his lesson. But the budget is full of half measures, backflips and old policies announced anew.

Australian women deserve real leadership, not cheap political fixes. We need a government committed to decent pay and job security for women, to their independence in retirement, to properly funding essential services and care, and to safety at work, at home and in our communities.

Real leadership means economic security and independence, and safety for Australian women. That requires thoughtful investment, not photo ops.

Scott Morrison and his government can't deliver that, because they just don't get it. Only an Albanese Labor Government will deliver what Australian women need and deserve.



TANYA PLIBERSEK
Shadow Minister for Women
Shadow Minister for Education

LEADER'S MESSAGE

The pandemic has deepened existing economic and social inequality for Australian women.

Women have shouldered a higher burden of unpaid care. Women have endured higher rates of job and wage loss. Women have been more likely to be part-time or casual workers in industries hardest hit by shutdowns. And women have seen the consequences of a government that closed its eyes to issues of workplace safety in what should be one of the safest buildings in the country, Parliament House.

These problems didn't happen overnight. Eight years of government neglect on issues that affect women have made all of us worse off.

For real economic change, women need to be at the centre of policy making and decision making in this country.

For a real surge in productivity, we need increased female workforce participation and gender diversity in the workplace.

The annual Women's Budget Statement – introduced by Labor and abandoned by Tony Abbott – is designed to focus the attention of government on the obstacles to equality, and the opportunities for reform.

Last year the centrepiece of my Budget Reply was a comprehensive child care policy. A plan to break through the current financial barriers that discourage second income earners, predominantly women, from working full time. Our policy will ensure that 97 per cent of families who use childcare will be better off. This is real reform.

Labor will lead a national push to tackle the gender pay gap and we will work to make women's jobs more secure.

Only Labor will create opportunities for women to thrive and a culture of respect and safety. In a government I lead, nobody will be left behind.

ANTHONY ALBANESE
Leader of the Opposition



While our economy is recovering from the worst recession in almost a century, women in Australia are being left behind. Women are facing underemployment and insecure work - they're paid less and retire on less. The pandemic has increased the challenges women face. The Women's Budget Statement is an essential tool to tackle those challenges, break down gender inequality and make Australia's economy stronger, broader and more sustainable.

JIM CHALMERS
Shadow Treasurer



COVID-19 has exacerbated gender inequality in Australia. Women have been more affected by unemployment and underemployment than men, we've shouldered more of the increase in unpaid work, we're less likely to get government support, and we'll feel the repercussions of early withdrawal from our superannuation funds for decades to come.

At the same time, we've seen a shocking spike in family and domestic violence that is pushing more women and children into homelessness and has stretched our frontline women's services beyond breaking point.

Women's safety and economic security must be priority issues in Australia's recovery plan.

SHARON CLAYDON
Chair, Labor's Status of Women Caucus Committee

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WHY WOMEN'S BUDGETS MATTER

Budgets matter for **all** Australians.

Thinking about the impacts your policies have on women is not about pitting women and men against each other. Women and men lead different lives, tend to do different jobs and participate in the workforce differently. We can experience different health issues and fall victim to different sorts of violence.

To deliver Budgets that work for all Australians, we need to think about the different ways men and women live their lives.

Australia was the first country in the world to introduce women's budget statements to help governments determine how their policies impact women. Started by the Hawke Labor Government, the practice continued for thirty years before the Abbott Government scrapped it in 2014.

Labor is committed to doing things right and making sure our budgets deliver for all Australians. We'll do this through:

A NATIONAL GENDER EQUALITY STRATEGY

Labor will introduce a national Gender Equality Strategy, to guide whole of government actions to achieve gender equality.

A GENDER LENS ON POLICY

Labor will introduce gender impact assessment on cabinet submissions and new policy proposals – as we have been doing in Opposition.

GENDER RESPONSIVE BUDGETING

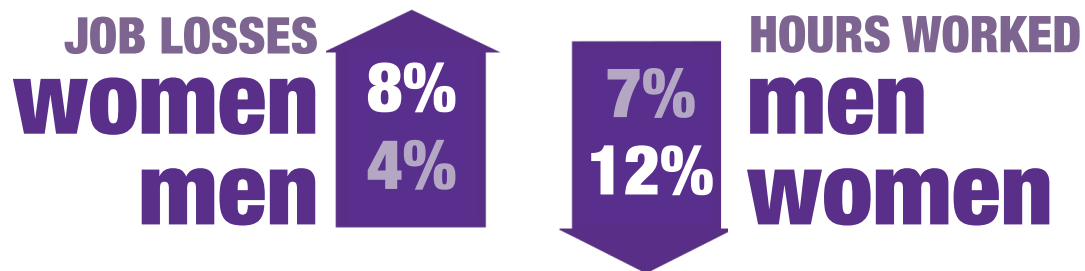
Labor will bring back the annual Women's Budget Statement to assess the impact new budget measures have on women and examine how the allocation of public resources affects gender equality.

EQUAL REPRESENTATION

Labor is committed to half our parliamentary representatives being women. When more women are at the table as decisions are made, Australian women know their interests and values are being reflected.

HOW THE PANDEMIC IMPACTED WOMEN

AT THE PEAK OF THE RECESSION



WOMEN'S HOUSEHOLD CHORES AND CARING RESPONSIBILITIES



2 out of 3
WOMEN

who experienced domestic abuse during the pandemic said it started or got worse during the pandemic

WOMEN ARE BEING LEFT OUT OF THE RECOVERY

Most women are back in work but they're returning to jobs with

LESS



hours

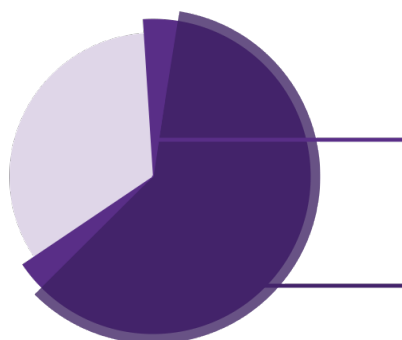


security



pay

COMPARED TO MEN



Of the jobs created since May

66.6%
are part time

60%
are casual

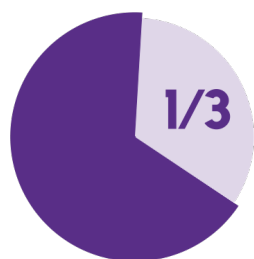
**614,300
WOMEN**

**SAY THEY DON'T HAVE
ENOUGH HOURS AT WORK**

**WOMEN EARN 31% LESS
PER WEEK ACROSS ALL JOBS**



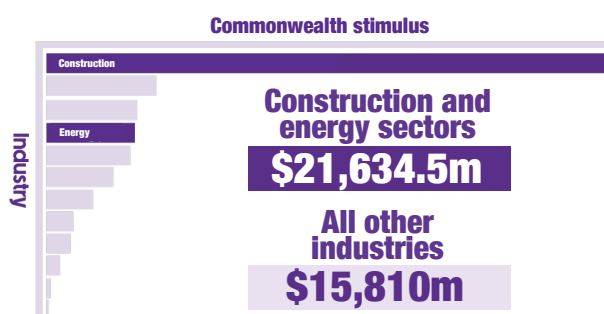
THE GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE LEFT WOMEN BEHIND



JobMaker Plan spending

Female job creation

Male job creation



THIS IS BAD FOR WOMEN AND BAD FOR THE ECONOMY

\$1 million

spent on construction = 2.5 jobs

spent on care = 12.5 jobs

THE 2021 BUDGET

Beyond the headlines and the hype, this Budget simply doesn't tackle the serious reforms needed to improve women's safety and economic security.

Eight years ago, the Liberal Party decided to cancel the annual women's budget statement, either because they didn't care about the budget's impact on women, or because they wanted to hide it. Since then, Australia has plummeted 26 spots down the global gender equality rankings to 50th place – our worst performance ever.

After eight long years of the Liberals, Australian women have fallen behind. Child care fees have gone up by more than a third; more than 900,000 women have had to raid their superannuation to get through the pandemic; more than a million women are looking for more work; and rates of sexual violence are on the rise.

There are things in this Budget that Labor supports – that we've been advocating for for years. We welcome the Government's adoption of Labor's policy to make sure people earning under \$450 a month receive superannuation. We welcome the increased funding for women's safety measures in this Budget. This will make a difference to women's lives and is well overdue.

But Australian women are entitled to ask: why is this only coming now? Eight years into government, after almost a decade of reports, inquiries and royal commissions, with hundreds of recommendations – most ignored until now.

You can see why Australian women are struggling to believe the Prime Minister's promises. Why they're looking at his record – and assuming that this is just another political fix. Or wondering why it's only now, in anticipation of an election, when women's trust in the Government has collapsed, that they remember women's policy.

And the truth is, when you look at the fine print, they're right to be sceptical.

This Budget forecasts a drop in workforce participation, while locking in pay cuts and a tax hike after the election. The Liberals have refused to commit to Labor's policies to help close the gender pay gap and increase pay for women workers – particularly in caring jobs. Instead, the Budget reveals real wages will go backwards.

Labor welcomes a greater focus on childcare, but these changes

only tinker around the edges of an unaffordable system. There's nothing to stop fees from sky-rocketing, and three quarters of the families who will get cheaper childcare under Labor will miss out under the Liberals.

On housing policy, women are bearing the brunt of Australia's affordable housing crisis, with sole parents, women and children escaping violence, and older women being locked out of the market. But the Government's policy for 2 per cent mortgage deposits will apply to just 1 in 400 sole parents.

Beyond the headlines and the hype, this Budget simply doesn't tackle the serious reforms needed to improve women's safety and economic security. The Government has cobbled together a package of piecemeal, short-term commitments, designed to give the Prime Minister some flashy announcements.

Australian women deserve better. They deserve a government committed to gender equality, all the time, not just when it's politically necessary. Labor has an agenda for women – written by women. It's why we've worked so hard to bring women into our parliamentary team: Labor is on the side of Australian women.

THE QUICK FACTS

- The Budget locks in wage cuts and a tax hike after the next election.
- Not enough to address the lack of safe, affordable housing for women and children fleeing domestic violence.
- No commitment to keep the Women's Budget Statement next year.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

Gender equity is not a priority for the Morrison Government. Under the Liberals, Australia has fallen from 24th to 50th place in the global gender equality rankings. We're performing even worse on women's economic security, falling from 13th to 70th place.

In the last 8 years this government has:

- Spent almost as much on advertising as on addressing violence against women.
- Tried to cut funding for legal services and safe housing options for women and children fleeing family violence.
- Cut \$88 million for new build for homelessness services and abolished the National Rental Affordability Scheme, preventing thousands of new homes being built for women and children fleeing violence
- Abolished the Family Court which experts now say "exposes survivors of family violence to unnecessary risk."
- Tried to make women escaping violence drain their superannuation accounts – saving the budget \$83 million but condemning women to poverty in old age.
- Tried to halve funding for consent and respectful relationships education in our schools.
- Still haven't implemented measures from their own 2018 and 2020 Women's Economic Security Statements.
- Awarded \$71 million in taxpayer money to companies who have failed to report on their gender pay gap and sexual harassment policies, as required by federal law.
- Declared "the gender pay gap has closed" when at the time the average woman still earned \$240 less than the average man every week.
- Defunded Working Women's Centers, cutting vulnerable workers' access to free legal support.
- Tried five times to slash Paid Parental Leave, calling mothers "rorters", "double dippers" and "fraudsters."

- Bragged the Government was delivering “highway upgrades” when asked about women having to give birth on the side of a highway because of lack of maternity services in the Yass Valley.
- Failed to appoint a single woman to the Victorian registry of the Federal Court.
- Told aged care workers, 87% of whom are women, to “get a better job” if they wanted better pay.
- Abolished penalty rates for retail, pharmacy and fast food workers, the majority of whom are female.
- Increased university fees meaning Australian women will pay almost \$500 million extra dollars every year - 50% more than men will.
- Scrapped gender equity targets in the aid budget after failing to meet them 6 years running.
- Spent more than two thirds of their \$150 million fund for women’s change rooms on swimming pools in marginal electorates through “Sports Rorts.”
- Ignored more than 8 reports detailing the challenges faced by women.

JOBS AND RECOVERY

IMPACT ON WOMEN



The COVID recession hit women particularly hard – they were more likely to lose their jobs, more likely to do a lot more unpaid work, and less likely to get government support.

At the peak of the recession in April last year, almost 8 per cent of Australian women had lost their jobs – twice the proportion of men who had. Women's hours at work were down 12 per cent, compared to 7 per cent for men.

Women are being left behind in the recovery.

Almost a million women are looking for more work in Australia today.

Women are more likely to be underemployed than men with an underemployment rate around 50 per cent higher.

Two thirds of jobs created since May are part time and 60 per cent are casual. Of the women in work, 1.4 million do not have access to paid leave entitlements.

And while women are returning to work now, the Grattan Institute says the economic effects of time out of the workforce are magnified for women, especially mothers – six months out of work can add another \$100,000 to the \$2 million average lifetime earnings gap between men and women.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD



For eight long years this Government has neglected women.

Last year's Budget turned its back on women – with nothing in it to get more women into work, despite women being more likely to work in sectors heavily impacted by shut downs and in casualised industries that shed jobs and were excluded from JobKeeper.

Yet the Government's budget response did nothing to help these women. More direct support flowed to the male-dominated construction and energy sectors than to all other sectors combined.

Many sectors that have a high proportion of female workers missed out on meaningful assistance, including higher education, the arts and tourism (where women lost their jobs at almost twice the rate men did).

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

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The Grattan Institute has estimated that two thirds of spending in the “JobMaker Plan” supported male job creation, with only one third supporting job creation benefiting women, despite research showing that investment in labour-intensive, female-dominated care industries generates more new jobs than investment in construction.

The Government’s failure to match its recovery package to need is leading to a crisis of underemployment and insecure work for women – locking them into a lifetime of economic insecurity.

JobKeeper

The Government’s own Budget papers confirm that women missed out on support under JobKeeper. Women were only 40 per cent of JobKeeper recipients in January. We know that at least 200,000 Australian women who work in the accommodation, food services, and retail trade sectors alone missed out on the JobKeeper payment due to its exclusion of casual workers. Women were twice as likely as men to have their JobKeeper payments halved because of cuts for part-timers.

JobMaker

The Government has been forced to admit that the centrepiece from their last budget, the \$4 billion JobMaker Hiring Credits program, only supported 1,000 of the 450,000 jobs the Government claimed it would. Many women over the age of 35 were deliberately excluded from this program and have not been properly supported to get work or more work.

THIS BUDGET

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Scott Morrison and Josh Frydenberg say they will drive the unemployment rate down below 5 per cent but they do not have a plan for getting women into secure jobs with decent pay.

While there is some well overdue support for care sectors in this Budget, the Government has done little to make sure the jobs created are secure and properly paid.

There is nothing in the Budget for the 110,000 women who have been looking for work for more than a year. Women looking for work will continue in the job hunt with even less support under the Government’s employment services changes.

Australian women on modest incomes will only receive a temporary tax break before the election and be dealt a tax hike after it. At the same time the highest income earners will enjoy a permanent tax cut forever. These tax cuts will see men get more than twice the benefit that women do.

The Government has failed to adopt Labor’s national push to close the gender pay gap – refusing to make it easier to deliver pay rises for women in low paid care sectors or to make companies publicly disclose their gender pay gaps.

And they’ve refused to adopt key measures in Labor’s Secure Australian Jobs plan to improve job security.

RETIREMENT INCOMES

IMPACT ON WOMEN



Too many Australian women are retiring into poverty. The fastest growing cohort of homeless people in Australia is older women. More than 40% of older single retired women live in poverty. A huge driver of this growing problem is the dramatic gap between men's retirement savings and women's retirement savings.

On average, Australian women retire today with \$118,000 in superannuation savings – about half what the average Australian man retires with. This gap is driven by the gender income gap but has been exacerbated by other inequities like women earning no superannuation when taking leave to care for children.

The Government's COVID-19 early withdrawal of superannuation policy saw around 940,000 women draw down their superannuation accounts. One in four women wiped out their account to try get through the pandemic, and while men were more likely to make a withdrawal, women took out a higher proportion of their savings because of their lower average account balances.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD



Aged pension

The Liberals have spent the past eight years attacking retirement incomes. The Liberals:

- Tried to cut pension indexation in 2014 and slashed \$1 billion from pensioner concessions in the same Budget.
- Attempted to cut pension indexation, which would have left pensioners \$80 a week worse off within a decade.
- Cut the pension asset test in 2015, causing around 370,000 pensioners to lose up to \$12,000 a year and 100,000 to lose their pension altogether.
- Attempted to scrap the Energy Supplement, which would have cut the Age Pension for 1.5 million pensioners over 10 years.
- Tried to raise the pension age to 70.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

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Superannuation

The Government's record on women's superannuation is dismal – when they haven't been ignoring the problem, they've made decisions that actively harm women.

The Government backflipped on its proposal to allow for the early release of superannuation for domestic violence victims earlier this year following enormous outcry by advocates, who pointed out that the scheme would create an avenue for economic abuse and put victims' superannuation into abusers' hands. This Budget revealed that the policy would have saved the Government \$83 million.

The Government failed to make women's retirement incomes a focus of their 2019 Retirement Incomes Review – failing to include gender analysis as a part of the terms of reference. As a result, the Review took very little consideration of the massive gap between men's and women's experiences of the superannuation system. The Government has tried to justify backing away from its election promise to increase the superannuation guarantee from 9.5% to 12%. Breaking this promise would cut retirement incomes for almost all Australian women.

One of the few Government promises that would positively impact women's retirement incomes is their 2018 promise to make superannuation balances more transparent in family separations. Under current policy, superannuation balances are easily hidden from former partners in legal contests due to the complexity of accessing information which is already held by the ATO. The Government could fix this problem with the stroke of a pen. But more than three years after announcing this policy, action is nowhere in sight.

In 2018, the Government also introduced its “catch up payments” policy to boost women's superannuation balances – but analysis at the time suggested men are almost twice as likely to benefit from the policy as women.

THIS BUDGET

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The Budget includes measures designed to boost women's superannuation but does little to tackle the cause of the problem – women are paid less and work fewer hours, often because they're balancing care responsibilities. The Budget fails to deliver the action needed on child care, the gender pay gap and affordable housing to ensure women don't retire into poverty.

The decision to adopt Labor's 2019 election policy and abolish the \$450 earnings threshold for superannuation payments is a worthy change. Australian women and Australian unions have been asking for this reform for years. As a result, low-income part-time workers – who are disproportionately women – will see more superannuation flowing into their accounts, and better outcomes in retirement.

AGED CARE

IMPACT ON WOMEN



According to the latest population trends, 38 per cent of Australian men and 55 per cent of Australian women will end up in permanent residential aged care. Fixing the broken system is a big issue for all of us, but it's impact for women will be greater than for men.

The aged care workforce is overwhelmingly female and continues to experience inadequate pay and conditions, as well as economic insecurity for workers, - contributing to the aged care crisis through burn out, with under resourced & undervalued staff.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD



The Coalition has cut aged care funding by \$1.7 billion, beginning in 2015-16 when Scott Morrison was Treasurer.

At the beginning 2021 some 64 per cent of private residential aged care providers were running a business loss. It will be 70 per cent by the year's end. It is just not sustainable. Provider financial failure is a serious risk to the whole system.

There has been a horrific rise in preventable causes of hospitalisation in the five years to 2018/19, including malnourishment (spiking by 19 per cent) and falls (increasing by 24 per cent). Tragically, 685 aged care deaths from COVID occurred under this Government's watch.

Sexual assaults in residential aged care facilities have escalated dramatically in recent years, almost doubling between 2014 and 2018. There are now 96,000 Australians on the huge wait list for Home Care Packages, over half of whom are women. In recent years, 27,278 older Australians have died while waiting for their approved home care package.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

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The Morrison Government also has a dismal record when it comes to supporting workers in aged care, the majority of whom are women. The Government scrapped the ground-breaking \$1.5 billion workforce compact Labor had delivered in government, meaning 300,000 workers missed opportunities to upgrade their skills and qualifications.

The Government also failed to adequately support the aged care workforce during the COVID-19 pandemic – leaving casual workers to fend for themselves with no access to sick leave and excluding 125,000 workers from the retention bonus payment.

THIS BUDGET

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This year's Budget offers nearly \$18 billion in aged care funding but still no enduring plan to fix the crisis. Many Royal Commission recommendations have not been actioned.

The announcement doesn't include any immediate funding to solve the malnutrition crisis; doesn't guarantee a nurse in every residential facility 24/7; and doesn't get rid of the home care wait list. Australia still lacks a detailed plan to value and pay care workers properly and deal with huge recruitment and retention challenges ahead. There's no strong accountability or transparency safeguards to stop price gouging and money wasting on management fees.

Experts have repeatedly stressed that to solve the aged care crisis it all comes back to workforce. The Government has categorically flunked this test in this Budget. They are cruelly letting down hundreds of thousands of Australian women in many age brackets– who both use the aged care system and deliver the care.

CHILD CARE

IMPACT ON WOMEN



The design of the child care subsidy and its interaction with family tax benefit and the personal income tax system constitutes institutional discrimination against working women by creating major financial penalties for increasing workforce participation.

As a consequence, many women who would like to work longer hours end up choosing to cut back. Not only is this a cost to family budgets, it is a drag on the economy and leads to long term economic insecurity.

Australia's female workforce participation rate falls in the prime parenting years, and women are much more likely to work part-time (12 per cent above the OECD average). The typical Australian woman with children of early childhood education and care age works 2.3 days a week.

These high workforce disincentives are a major driver of the gender pay gap, the gender income gap and the superannuation payout gap. We can't begin to fix the gap in retirement incomes unless we tackle the gender income gap, and that means fixing our broken childcare system.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD



Australian families are paying higher out of pocket costs than ever before under the Morrison Government. Child care fees have soared by 35.9 per cent since the Liberals took power. Costs have continued to climb since the introduction of the new Scott Morrison-designed system in 2018.

Over the past twelve months, child care costs soared by more than three times the rate of inflation.

The latest ABS data confirms Scott Morrison's child care system has completely failed in less than three years. The cost of child care is now higher than it was under the previous child care system and is the highest it has ever been.

Analysis from the Productivity Commission confirms child care costs are locking Australian parents out of the workforce. There are almost 92,000 families (up 23 per cent in a year) who are now locked out of the work because child care is unaffordable.

Increasing female workforce participation is one of the biggest economic opportunities available for governments looking to kickstart economies after the COVID-19 recession, but the Morrison Government refuses to take serious action.

The Government also abandoned child care workers, 97 per cent of whom are women, by kicking them off JobKeeper months before other workers.

THIS BUDGET



Unfortunately, the child care package in this Budget is a missed opportunity – hundreds of thousands of families will miss out on relief compared to Labor’s Cheaper Child Care Plan.

The Government’s child care proposal will only lift the child care subsidy rate for families who have a second or subsequent child under five years old in the system at the same time. It makes the already complicated system even more complicated.

In comparison, Labor’s Cheaper Child Care Plan lifts the subsidy and smooths the taper rate across the board, regardless of how many children the family has or how old they are, leaving 97 per cent of families – more than one million families – better off.

Three quarters of the families benefiting from Labor’s Cheaper Child Care Plan will miss out on any increase in their child care subsidy under the Liberals’ plan, and those who do benefit will have to wait more than a year to see any relief.

There’s a lot missing from the Liberals’ announcement compared to Labor’s policy:

- It does nothing to stop fees from continuing to skyrocket with no commitment to investigate price regulation to ensure all benefits go into the pockets of families.
- Families struggling under the cost of out of school hours and vacation care will not benefit at all.
- Families with only one child in child care will get no extra support at all.

It neglects Labor’s clear ambition to move to a universal 90 per cent subsidy, delivering long-term, meaningful reform.

SKILLS, TRAINING AND STUDY

IMPACT ON WOMEN



The “jobs gap” marks the distance we have to travel as nation when it comes to getting women into good secure jobs. Government has a critical role to play in bridging that gap by prioritising targeted investment in skills and training.

During the pandemic, women of childbearing age gave up study in record numbers. The biggest fall in higher education enrolments in more than 15 years occurred at the height of the first lockdown as caring responsibilities made it hard for women to continue study. Over 40,000 fewer Australian women aged 25-44 were enrolled in study than the same time the year before. Enrolments for men grew by about 35,000 over the same period.

Skills and training are a critical pathway to participating in work for many women and could be for more. Reducing barriers to that training by dropping the cost of qualifications is a game changer. In Victoria, the number of women accessing vocational education and training increased by 118 per cent following the introduction of Free TAFE.

THE LIBERALS’ RECORD



TAFE & skills

The number of women taking on apprenticeships has halved under this government. There are 50,000 fewer female apprentices under this government. But last year’s Budget had nothing in it to get more women into work and nothing to make vocational education and training more accessible.

Instead, men were three times more likely to benefit from wage subsidies for existing apprenticeships than women, who only make up a quarter of Australian Apprentices.

Instead of investing in the skills system, the government cut \$3 billion out of vocational education and training before the COVID-19 pandemic. That has meant fewer women taking on vocational education and training. Now is not the time for patchwork solutions on skills training – that won’t arrest the damage done over the past eight years.

Women dominate critical high-demand occupations like aged care, child care and disability services, which rely on vocational education and training, but these are all areas the Government has been reluctant to fund and support.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD


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Universities

The Morrison Government's Job Ready Graduates legislation has put women further into debt. Women make up two thirds of the students starting university paying more for their degrees – up to \$60,000 for a basic degree. The Budget papers confirm that Government funding for higher education will fall because of Job Ready Graduates, while student debt levels are driven up.

Caring responsibilities and pay inequity mean women are often slower to pay off their HELP debts – accumulating more interest and ultimately paying more for their degrees. Women will face higher student debt levels under this Government and it will now take some students a decade longer to pay back their higher fees, while entering into an uncertain, post-recession job market.

At the same time, Scott Morrison's exclusion of universities from JobKeeper resulted in tens of thousands of academic and professional staff losing their jobs. This has disproportionately affected women who make up nearly 60 per cent of the highly casualised university workforce. This Budget has failed to improve the financial security and working conditions of the women employed in Australian universities.

RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION

Young people are crying out for more support to keep them safe – more than 3,400 schoolgirls have recently shared stories of their sexual assaults as students and over 35,000 have signed a petition calling for reform of the sex education curriculum. This problem continues into university where recent years have seen revelations of a sexual assault crisis on campus.

Teaching our kids about respectful and healthy relationships should be a national priority, but when it comes providing age-appropriate consent and respectful relationships education to Australian students, the Morrison Government has failed again.

After a six year delay delivering the program, last Budget, the Government attempted to use COVID as cover to slash funding for the RespectMatters program in half, placing milkshakes and metaphors over meaningful conversations with our children about healthy, respectful relationships.

HEALTH

IMPACT ON WOMEN



Australian women deserve the best possible standard of health care.

While women enjoy longer lives than men, they spend more years with conditions like heart disease – the leading cause of ill-health for Australian women.

Overall life expectancy figures also mask stark disparities for some women. On average, First Nations women live eight years less than other Australian women. And women in disadvantaged areas have twice the rate of potentially avoidable deaths than those in higher income areas.

Australian women also face unique health challenges. For example, they are more likely to experience physical violence, and much more likely to experience sexual violence – with one in five Australian women reporting sexual violence since the age of 15.

Such challenges have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare research shows throughout the pandemic, women were nearly twice as likely to have experienced loneliness than men. In July 2020, 19% of women surveyed had used a mental health support service since March 2020. In November 2020, the research showed that women were more likely than men to have experienced high or very high levels of psychological distress.

Women are also more exposed to COVID-19 in health care settings as nearly four in five workers in Health Care and Social Assistance are female.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

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Scott Morrison doesn't understand women's health needs. He told Parliament that the lack of maternity services in regional areas could be addressed with better roads. The Government's Assistant Minister for Women last week addressed a rally campaigning against women's access to reproductive health care. But Labor knows that Australian women face unique health challenges that deserve urgent attention.

But Labor knows that Australian women face unique health challenges that deserve urgent attention.

Because women seek health care more often, they are more exposed to record out-of-pocket costs for care under Scott Morrison. Australian women are around 50 per cent more likely than men to delay or avoid GP visits due to cost, with over 350,000 women forced to skip seeing their GP each year. Even more women skip seeing a specialist (375,000 a year) or filling a prescription (612,000). And a staggering 1.2 million Australian women skip dental care each year due to the cost of seeing a dentist.

THIS BUDGET

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Additional funding for women's health is welcome. Labor will work through the Budget announcements and consult with women's health stakeholders on the measures announced. Many health measures just continue existing funding, or add new items to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme – this is ordinary government business.

SPORT

IMPACT ON WOMEN



Women's participation in club-based team sports has boomed in recent years but many community sporting clubs still lack appropriate facilities for women and girls, including change rooms.

Cricket experienced 61 per cent growth in female participation over the four years to 2020 but only 20 per cent of venues have change rooms that are female friendly – and many other sports are in the same situation.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD



The Morrison Government has a history of using women's sport as cover for spending taxpayers' money on its own political purposes.

The Government announced that boosting female participation was a key goal of the Community Sport Infrastructure Grants program ("Sports Rorts") but ignored highly-rated applications for women's change rooms in favour of projects in marginal and target seats that were not recommended for grants by Sport Australia.

Scott Morrison and Bridget McKenzie said the \$150 million so-called 'Female Facilities and Water Safety Stream' they announced just before the 2019 election was "specifically to help build new female change rooms" so women and girls wouldn't have to "get changed behind towels on the side of fields or in cars" but then spent more than \$100 million on swimming pools in marginal seats.

The Morrison Government also gave Fox Sports \$30 million (later topped up with another \$10 million), which it claimed was to increase coverage of women's sport. But no guidelines, goals or criteria were developed before the funding was provided. The Government often says "you can't be what you can't see" – spending taxpayers' money to subsidise women's sport being locked behind a subscription paywall certainly doesn't help.

THIS BUDGET



We welcome funding for the Matildas and women's basketball World Cup. The Government should also provide more funding to support women and girls participation in grassroots sport.

When they got caught out on Sports Rorts, Scott Morrison and Josh Frydenberg flagged further funding in the 2020-21 Budget for the communities they ripped off. They didn't deliver. And they haven't made good in this Budget.

WOMEN'S SAFETY

IMPACT ON WOMEN



Every Australian deserves to live free from violence. Domestic violence is the leading cause of serious injury, disability, and death for women in Australia aged between 14 and 45. On average, one woman a week is killed by her current or former partner.

One in four women have experienced family violence and one in five women have experienced sexual violence since the age of 15. High profile reports of rape in recent months have shown how our justice system fails to protect victims of sexual violence.

Family and domestic violence has only worsened since the pandemic began. Two out of three women who experienced domestic abuse during the pandemic said it started or got worse during the pandemic. Frontline services are reporting that 2020 was their worse year on record. Services have repeatedly warned that without adequate investment, they are having to turn victims and their children away.

- Refugees report turning away up to half of the women who come to them for help.
- Only 1 in 10 women who want to stay home safely have the support to do so.
- Women's legal services can't pick up 40 per cent of the high risk calls they receive.
- The waiting list for men's behaviour change programs is up to a year in regional areas.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

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The Morrison Government has consistently failed to deliver on its commitments to address family violence. Funding for crucial family violence services has not kept pace with the increase in demand from women and children trying to escape violent relationships.

Successive Liberal Governments have failed to invest in safe, affordable, and appropriate housing for women and children fleeing violence. This means too many women are faced with the impossible choice of staying in an abusive relationship or fleeing to face homelessness and poverty.

The Government's own services are also failing. A recent review of Centrelink services for women experiencing family violence found long wait times, poor decision making and fewer opportunities for women to speak to expert social workers and get support.

THIS BUDGET

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Funding for the prevention of family and domestic violence in this Budget is welcome. This money is desperately needed right now. The Government should make it clear when organisations will receive support. Australian women cannot afford any further delay in the urgent task of tackling violence.

This Budget did nothing to address the lack of safe, affordable housing for women and children fleeing domestic violence.

RESPECT AT WORK

The former Attorney-General, Christian Porter, allowed the landmark Respect@Work Report on sexual harassment in Australian workplaces gather dust on his desk for over a year and refused to meet with the Sex Discrimination Commissioner to discuss the report's recommendations.

The Government's eventual response has been described by experts as a "missed opportunity" and a "failure" with "massive gaps."

While this Budget provides some extra funding, we're yet to see the details and in many cases the Government has tried to pass off funding responsibility to the states and territories.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS

IMPACT ON WOMEN



Unaffordable housing disproportionately impacts women, who on average earn less, and have fewer savings and less superannuation, making it harder to pay rent or a mortgage. This becomes harder for mothers who are sole parents or escaping violence, who often struggle to afford larger houses needed to fit their children. Because of this, women are more reliant on housing assistance and services.

Women are the main users of public, state owned and managed Indigenous housing, and community housing; in 2018–2019, 440,000 women relied on these services. Women also receive 56 per cent of the Commonwealth Rent Assistance paid to individuals and families on very low incomes.

According to the 2020 Specialist Homelessness Services Report, 60 per cent of people accessing specialist homelessness services are women and of the 260 people turned away from services every day, two in three were women. Of those, nearly 9 in 10 were women with children.

Women and children experiencing family and domestic violence make up the largest group of homeless people in Australia. More than 119,200 people experiencing domestic violence – or 41 per cent – sought help from specialist homelessness services in 2019–20. Around 10,000 of these women and children were turned away because there wasn't a bed.

The fastest growing cohort of homeless Australians are women aged 65 to 74, with the 2016 Census identifying growth of 31 per cent. Around 400,000 women over 45 are at risk of homelessness in Australia.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

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The Morrison Government has failed to produce a plan to reduce the rising number of older women experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness. The high cost of housing and a severe shortage of social housing only make this problem worse.

In February 2019, the Australian Government announced \$78 million for the Safe Places Emergency Accommodation Program, \$60 million was allocated to a grants program that aims to expand emergency accommodation for women and children experiencing family violence. It took almost 20 months before the Morrison Government announced the organisation that would receive funding, and to date, construction is yet to commence more than two years after Morrison's announcement.

THIS BUDGET

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The 2021 Budget has once again ignored Australia's housing and homelessness crisis. Its Family Home Guarantee is minimum help, maximum hype and doesn't do anywhere near enough.

The housing policy will only assist 10,000 single parents over four years, of the one million single parent families in Australia. That means only one in 400 single parent families will benefit.

The Government said this budget would be all about women's physical security but they have only committed \$12.6 million over three years for crisis accommodation for women and children fleeing family and domestic violence.

Labor has called on the Morrison Government to invest in social and affordable housing. Now is the time to help put a roof over the heads of women experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE

IMPACT ON WOMEN



Leaving a violent relationship often gives rise to a large number of distinct but related legal issues, including disputes over property, family violence orders, child protection matters, housing and employment issues and welfare-related legal need. Access to a lawyer helps to ensure that small legal issues – like an unpaid debt – do not become much bigger problems for Australian women.

Women's legal services across Australia have reported a dramatic increase in the demand for their services in recent months. Right now, legal services are having to turn away up to half the financially disadvantaged and vulnerable women escaping domestic and family violence who come to them desperate for help.

Frontline legal services dealing with domestic violence matters were already struggling before the COVID-19 pandemic hit and are now unable to answer 50 per cent of their calls.

There is also significant unmet legal need from women who experience sexual harassment in the workplace. As the Respect@Work Report found, legal services “have an important role in advising workers on the relative merits of their options, providing guidance on which might be best suited to their circumstances, and giving support to redress power imbalances and avoid further trauma. In court proceedings or in statutory conciliation, legal representation may result in a fairer, more efficient process.”

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

i

For eight long years, consecutive Liberal Governments have neglected the family law system and frontline legal services.

When it comes to the family law system, judges have not been replaced in a timely manner, funding has not increased in response to increasing demand and review after review – including many dozens of sensible and modest recommendations for reform – have been ignored.

Now, the family law system is at breaking point – and yet instead of fixing it, the Morrison Government has made a bad situation worse by effectively abolishing the specialist, standalone Family Court of Australia. Merging the Family Court with the equally overburdened and under-resourced Federal Circuit Court, will do nothing to address the problem of delay in the family court system, where it can currently take as long as 3-and-a-half years between a court filing and a judgement being handed down.

The merger of the two courts was condemned by experts as “a terribly gamble with the lives of children and families” and as exposing “survivors of family violence to unnecessary risk”.

THIS BUDGET

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Additional funding is welcome, but it is not enough – and much more needs to be done in some critical areas. For example, despite the great harm and additional stress caused to families by long delays in the overburdened family court system, the Budget does not appear to provide any additional funding for the appointment of new judges. Yet multiple reviews have made clear that increased judicial resources are critical to clearing case backlogs and ensure quicker resolution of family disputes.

FIRST NATIONS WOMEN

IMPACT ON WOMEN



First Nations women continue to be grossly overrepresented across indicators of disadvantage, including housing, safety, economic opportunity, health, education and financial security. The issues that affect First Nations women are multilayered and differ from those of other women. They need to be at the decision-making table if solutions are to be effective. Yet the Government's 2021-22 Budget demonstrates that it is not listening to the voices of First Nations women.

First Nations women are rarely recognised for the extensive work they do to support their families and communities or their vital role in cultural maintenance and the revitalisation of language. Many are on low incomes or unemployed. In 2016, only 41 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women were employed. Government policies such as the Cashless Welfare Card (where 68 per cent of participants are First Nations) and the Parents Next program (where 18 per cent of participants are First Nations) are applied punitively to entrench rather than alleviate women's inequality.

First Nations women also experience high levels of systemic discrimination. First Nations women are the fastest growing prison population, and are 21.2 times more likely to be incarcerated than non-Indigenous women. These women have often experienced domestic violence, poverty, racism and poor mental health.

Three in every five First Nations women have experienced physical or sexual violence. First Nations women are 32 times more likely to be hospitalised due to family violence than non-Indigenous women and 11 times more likely to die due to assault than non-Indigenous women. First Nations women also report higher rates of anxiety and depression than Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

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Australia has consistently failed to address the concerns and priorities of First Nations women. The Government has:

- Failed to respond to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner's landmark Wiyi Yani U Thangani (Women's Voices) report, which represents the first engagement project specifically with First Nations women in 34 years – and has not committed funding to key calls for a First Nations women's summit.
- Sought to expand punitive measures like the Cashless Welfare Card that have a disproportionate impact on First Nations women and their families.
- Cut funding to the peak advocacy body representing First Nations women escaping family and domestic violence.
- Refused calls from First Nations women leaders for a specific national plan to address violence against First Nations women.
- Dedicated more funding in this budget to an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 'Personal Safety Survey' than to specialist First Nations front-line domestic violence services.
- Failed to respond to the ALRC's Pathways to Justice report into rising rates of incarceration, including of First Nations women.
- Provided no additional Commonwealth funding to meet the new child protection, housing and justice targets in the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, which are designed to reduce the overrepresentation of First Nations people in the child protection and criminal justice systems.
- Failed to deliver on the vision of the Uluru Statement from the Heart for a First Nations Voice to the Parliament which has the capacity to provide First Nations women with a direct say in policy that impacts their lives.

Labor welcomes additional funding in the Budget to support additional places for First Nations students in "girls academies" programs

MIGRATION AND MULTICULTURALISM

IMPACT ON WOMEN



Multiculturalism is one of Australia's greatest achievements. As a nation with citizens from 200 countries speaking 260 different languages, diversity is one of our greatest strengths. But there's more we need to do to support women from culturally diverse backgrounds to live fulfilling lives in Australia.

Migrant women can experience lower levels of economic security as they participate in the workforce at lower rates and their earnings are often low relative to their skills and experience. Women from culturally diverse communities who are experiencing violence can face barriers to accessing services and are less likely to leave a family violence situation than other Australian women.

Often, migrant women's visa status can make them more vulnerable to abuse at home or exploitation in the workforce.

Women may be unable to leave a violent relationship due to their visa status because their only other option is to leave Australia without their children or because they have no access to income or non-emergency medical services.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, there was an increase in referrals for migrant and refugee women to specialist domestic and family violence services.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

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Too many women from culturally diverse backgrounds were let down and left behind by the Morrison Government during the pandemic. The Government has failed to support women on temporary visas – even failing to accurately translate important public health messages.

Many people have been separated from their families because of the Morrison Government backlog of 97,000 partner and 55,000 parent visa applicants, which needs to be fixed. The Government's English language test for partner visas has also been described by experts as unfair and potentially dangerous for vulnerable women.

THIS BUDGET

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This Budget fails to provide a fair deal for multicultural communities, and to make sure the strengths of multicultural women are valued and recognised.

WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES

IMPACT ON WOMEN



Around 240,000 more Australian women than men are living with some form of disability. We know that women make up more than two thirds of primary carers in Australia and 55.5 per cent of all carers.

Compared to their peers, women with disability experience significantly higher levels of all forms of violence more intensely and frequently and are subjected to violence by a greater number of perpetrators. Their experiences of violence last over a longer period of time, and more severe injuries result from the violence. Elderly single women living with disability are more likely to live in poverty than men living with disability.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD



In the 2019 Budget, the Government cut \$4.6 billion out of the NDIS to prop up a surplus that never eventuated – now, they are claiming the NDIS is unsustainable.

In 2018 the Government set up a \$35 million a year disability watchdog that has only issued a handful of infringements to dodgy providers in two years – meaning the Government is failing to protect women subjected to violence and neglect. In last year's Budget, the Government announced \$93 million for the NDIS Commission to hire just 6 new investigators.

The National Disability Insurance Scheme's (NDIS) planning pathway and the provision of services under the scheme involve regular contacts with people with disabilities that could be used to identify and intercept domestic and family violence. Despite this, the Government has failed to recognise the opportunity for family violence intervention by introducing a family violence strategy.

THIS BUDGET



When responding to the \$4.6 billion underspend 2019-20, the government blamed “dodgy data” and claimed the NDIS would always be fully funded.

Treasurer Josh Frydenberg said the NDIS was a demand-driven program and every approved plan would be fully funded.

Now, the Government are claiming the NDIS is unsustainable after eight years of waste on lawyers and consultants and allowing fraud and criminal activity to damage the scheme.

This contradicts their own modelling that shows the scheme has been on track with projected spending since 2017.

This misleading claim about NDIS costs is being used to pave the way for cuts to the scheme via the plan for compulsory Independent Assessments, which will make it harder for women with disabilities to access NDIS support.

Labor would strengthen the disability watchdog and tighten timeframes for decisions made by the NDIA and the watchdog.

Labor would return people with lived disability experience to the board and to senior levels of the National Disability Insurance Agency, making sure women with disability have a voice in how the NDIS works.

YOUNG WOMEN AND GIRLS

IMPACT ON WOMEN



Young Australians are bearing the brunt of the COVID-19 recession and recovery, suffering from significant loss of work, severe mental health challenges, and disruption to their education and training.

Unemployment has skyrocketed for all young Australians, but young women were much worse off, with 45 per cent reporting losing their job due to COVID-19, compared to 34 per cent of young men.

One in five young Australian women were living with anxiety or depression in 2019, before the challenges of the pandemic. Experts reported that young women were more likely to seek mental health support during the pandemic than their male counterparts.

Young women's futures have also been impacted by the Early Access Superannuation Scheme. Analysis shows that one million workers under the age of 35 either completely emptied their accounts or now have less than \$1,000 in super. Young women were more likely to access their super compared to men in the same age group.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

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The Liberal Government is refusing to listen to young people. They established a Youth Taskforce in 2019, but have fallen silent since the Taskforce handed down its interim report in December 2019. The final report is almost six months overdue.

While the Government sits on its hands the situation for young women is getting worse. The Government's own Interim Report of the Youth Taskforce acknowledged that young Australians are becoming more disenchanted with government. A recent report found 73 per cent of young women aged 18-21 do not believe that women in politics are treated equally to men.

Youth underemployment now sits at over 16 per cent, but the Government's Youth Jobs PaTH program has been a complete failure. Over four years after it was announced, they haven't met even half the original target for new internships.

Low wage growth, underemployment, unaffordable housing, less accessible education, the precariousness of the gig economy and increasing inequality of wealth means, for the first time in our modern history, young Australians are set to inherit a less prosperous and less secure future.

THIS BUDGET

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The Budget was a missed opportunity to make sure this generation of young women don't end up worse off than those before them.

Young Australians deserve a whole-of-government plan that tackles the multiple crises they are facing. Labor continues to call on the Government and the Minister to urgently implement a COVID-19 Youth Recovery Strategy that is co-designed with young people. That would be a real leap towards a more prosperous and secure future for young people and our nation.

Labor will continue to listen to and work with young Australians

WOMEN IN DEFENCE

IMPACT ON WOMEN



Incidents of sexual assault in the Australian Defence Force (ADF) remain at near-record levels with 161 sexual assaults reported to Military Police in 2019-20.

Many women subjected to sexual assault have reported a lack of support or victimisation during the complaints process, highlighting a failure by the ADF to hold alleged perpetrators to account. Many reported cases have not proceeded to an investigation and many of the women involved felt they had to abandon their careers in the ADF.

Of the 131 complaints of sexual assault, involving 180 alleged perpetrators, referred by the Defence Abuse Response Taskforce (DART) to Defence, only three have resulted in any formal administrative or disciplinary action.

This lack of support and accountability has resulted in female service personnel and veterans taking their own lives in recent months. Ex-service women have a suicide rate twice that of the general female population, while a majority of female veterans who suffer a mental health condition have been victims of sexual abuse in the ADF.

More broadly, the proportion of female members in the ADF remains low at around 19 per cent, while there are fewer women in senior leadership roles and fewer promotion opportunities for women.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

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The Government has failed to address cultural issues within Defence, and has refused to take seriously issues of sexual abuse in the ADF and veteran suicide. When women in Defence report these incidents, they need to be dealt with properly and not swept under the carpet.

Despite a number of reviews and measures put in place to prevent sexual assaults and abuse under the former Labor government, the number of incidents has not improved over the last eight years under this government, while rates of veteran suicide have worsened.

Abuse and harassment in any workforce should not be tolerated. Labor is committed to ensuring that those who have been abused during their time in the ADF receive the support they need.

It was the former Labor Government that initiated the DART in response to reports of sexual misconduct within the ADF. As a result of this report, the Defence Force Ombudsman's role was expanded to include an abuse reporting function. Also under the previous Labor government, a review by the Sex Discrimination Commissioner led to the establishment of the ADF's Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Office.

THIS BUDGET

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Labor has been calling for a Royal Commission into defence and veteran suicides since 2019.

Now that the Government has finally announced this, Labor's view is that the role of Defence and the Department of Veterans' Affairs, and the impacts of sexual abuse of female defence personnel, on mental health need to be included in the Terms of Reference.

The draft themes released by the Government do not refer to these issues, however it is vital that they are considered by the Royal Commission and that it has the power to make findings of civil and criminal wrongdoing.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND DISASTERS

IMPACT ON WOMEN



Australia is one of the most natural disaster-prone countries in the world, with the frequency and intensity of natural disasters increasing due to climate change.

Households and communities already facing existing stress or hardship, including those living on low or fixed incomes, people with chronic health issues, people with a disability, and those facing financial stress, can be particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change such as increased heatwaves, extreme weather events and more intense and frequent bushfires. Disasters disproportionately affect women and girls, with women and children 14 times more likely to die in a natural disaster on a global scale.

Women and children are also more likely to suffer in the aftermath of natural disasters, such as displacement, social isolation, psychological trauma and financial despair increase the likelihood of domestic and family violence.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD



The Liberal National Government have had 22 energy policies in eight years - that uncertainty terrifies investors, it's killing jobs and pushing power prices up.

They promised a long-term emissions reduction strategy two years ago - it's stuck in the black hole of undelivered promises by Scott Morrison.

They've gutted the Climate Change Authority so much you can count the staff on two hands.

Two years since it was announced, the Government have not released a cent from their \$4 billion Emergency Response Fund. This funding could be building levees, fire breaks and women and child- safe evacuation shelters in disaster-prone communities right now and helping communities recover from devastating fires and floods. Instead it's languishing in Scott Morrison's bank account.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

IMPACT ON WOMEN



Gender inequality plays an outsized role in poverty and disadvantage in many countries. According to the United Nations:

- Globally women aged 25 to 34 are 25 per cent more likely than their male counterparts to live in extreme poverty, surviving on less than US\$1.90 a day
- Just over 30 per cent of young women aged 15 to 24 were not in education, employment or training in 2020, more than double the rate for young men
- Globally, 750 million women and girls were married before the age of 18 and at least 200 million women and girls in 30 countries have undergone female genital mutilation

Pursuing gender equality is not only good for women and girls, it is also good for economic and social development. When women and girls are empowered, and barriers to their participation are removed, economies grow faster, health and education outcomes for women and children improve, and there is greater social stability, sustainability and equality.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD



Since 2013 the Liberal Government has cut Australia's aid budget by \$11.8 billion. Annual Official Development Assistance (ODA) spending is now nearly \$700 million less than under the former Labor Government. The Liberal cuts in overseas aid have hurt some of the poorest people in the world and have fallen especially harshly on women and children in developing countries. This Budget will see ODA fall from \$4.41 billion in 2020-21 to \$4.35 billion in 2021-22 – at a time when the challenges of COVID are rising in developing countries in Australia's region.

The Government's own statistics show that Australia's ODA spending on programs which have gender equality as a principal or significant objective has been cut by \$840 million since the Government took office.

The Liberals have failed to meet their own target of ensuring that more than 80 per cent of Australian aid investments address gender issues – in fact, after failing to meet the target every single year since 2014-15, Foreign Minister Marise Payne dropped the target altogether in 2020.

LABOR'S PLAN

Labor has a proud legacy of advancing women's rights and a long-held commitment to gender equality.

A Labor Government will introduce a National Gender Equality Strategy to guide whole of government actions to achieve gender equality.

CHILD CARE

For millions of working women, it's simply not worth working more than three days a week. This derails careers and deprives working women of opportunities they've earned. That is why Labor's Cheaper Child Care for Working Families will:

- Scrap the \$10,560 child care subsidy cap which often sees women losing money from an extra day's work.
- Lift the maximum child care subsidy rate to 90 per cent.
- Increase child care subsidy rates for every family earning less than \$530,000.

We'll also get the ACCC to design a price regulation mechanism to drive out of pocket costs down for good, and the Productivity Commission will conduct a comprehensive review of the sector with the aim of implementing a universal 90 per cent subsidy for all families.

Labor's plan will provide cheaper childcare for working families so that 97 per cent – more than a million families – are better off, and will remove financial barriers that are a disincentive for second income earners – usually women – to work more hours.

Three quarters of families who will be better off under Labor's Cheaper Child Care Plan will miss out on any increase in their child care subsidy under the Liberals' plan.

GENDER PAY EQUITY

A Labor Government will lead a national drive to close the gender pay gap and increase pay for women workers – particularly in caring jobs. Labor will:

- Strengthen the ability and capacity of the Fair Work Commission to order pay increases for workers in low paid, female dominated industries.
- Legislate so companies with more than 250 employees will have to report their gender pay gap publicly.
- Prohibit pay secrecy clauses and give employees the right to disclose their pay, if they want to.
- Take action to address the gender pay gap in the Australian Public Service.

DECENT, SECURE WORK

Women workers are disproportionately impacted by insecure work. Labor's Secure Australian Jobs plan will help transform the working lives of many Australian women, including:

- Providing more protections for casual workers and better job security.
- Delivering better protections for people doing gig work and other "employee-like" forms of work – like women working in aged care and disability care, where gig work is spreading rapidly.

WOMEN'S SAFETY

- Labor will strengthen the National Employment Standards by legislating a right to ten days paid family and domestic violence leave – because women experiencing family violence should not have to choose between leaving a violent relationship and keeping their job.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

- Labor will work with key stakeholders on how best to fully implement all 55 recommendations from the Respect@Work Report.

SUPERANNUATION

- Labor will ensure that the legislated increase in the superannuation guarantee – from 9.5% to 12% - goes ahead, despite the repeated attempts by the Government to backpedal on this election promise. This change will mean that Australian women retire with more money, not less.

Labor's Status of Women Committee and Shadow Minister for Women are further developing our comprehensive women's policy to take to the next election.

**CONTINUE THE
CONVERSATION**

@AustralianLabor
#BudgetAndWomen

