A $1.5 million, first-of-its-kind support service which will help families in need and youth at risk of ending up on the streets was officially opened by Family and Community Services Minister Marion Scrymgour today.

Ms Scrymgour said the Intensive Support Service – to be run by Centacare - is an important part of the NT Government’s $53 million overhaul of the Child Protection System.

The NT Government has already tripled the child protection budget since coming to Government, put on extra staff and put new systems in place to rebuild Child Protection Services.

“The NT Government is working hard for Territory families and supporting them to get ahead,” Ms Scrymgour said.

“As part of our massive reform agenda we are allocating $1.5 million over three years to Centacare to provide this intensive family support service to assist high risk families,” Ms Scrymgour said.

Ms Scrymgour said the new service is a proactive approach to dealing with children and youth at risk of ending up on the streets.

“When families struggle children struggle, and often if life at home is not pleasant then young people head out on to the street,” she said.

“Young people causing disturbances at night often come from families that are not coping, but through this service, families will be assisted to provide a healthy and safe environment for their children.”

Ms Scrymgour said that the NT Government is committed to working in partnership with the non-government sector in the critical areas of family support – and the allocation of this money to Centacare highlights this.

“These partnerships reflect the care and protection of our children is a shared community responsibility.”

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