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# Cash boost to help abused kids

**Children | Shaun Campbell**

DOZENS of abused children are finally getting the help they need after the State Government made good on a promise to boost funding for a Mitcham-based counselling service.

Australian Childhood Foundation chief executive Joe Tucci said the Government had confirmed that it would provide an additional \$300,000 in recurrent funding for the next three years.

He said the increase meant the foundation's counselling services would receive more than \$700,000 a year from the state.

The government announced a \$1.35 million a year funding boost for sexual assault counselling services in May this year.

Dr Tucci said the foundation was told what its share of the extra cash would be late last month.

He said two counsellors, hired in July, had slashed waiting times to five weeks,

**It is a positive response and recognition that there is an increasing demand for counselling**

**JOE TUCCI**

down from four months in May.

He said 20-30 children were now waiting for their first appointment, down from 75-80. "It is a positive response and recognition that there is an increasing demand for counselling," Dr Tucci said. "The impact on our timeliness is a win for every child."

Dr Tucci said the funding would provide outreach programs for children as well as group and individual counselling for parents.

"This will enhance the quality of the counselling children receive and provide a more sustainable result," he said.