



2014 Budget

Stronger Relationships trial

Divorce and relationship breakdown cost the economy around \$3 billion every year, while Access Economics has reported that the benefits of positive family functioning represent \$5.4 billion of savings. Beyond the staggering economic cost is the personal trauma that has a significant impact on the health, educational opportunities and wellbeing of families and communities.

People in healthy relationships and their children are likely to live longer, report fewer health problems and use health and wellbeing services substantially less than people in distressed relationships.

What was announced in the 2014 Budget?

The Budget is part of the Australian Government's Economic Action Strategy to build a strong, prosperous economy and a safe, secure Australia.

Investing in marriage and relationship education and counselling can strengthen relationships and help improve personal and family wellbeing—it makes social and economic sense.

That's why the Australian Government is implementing the *Stronger Relationships* trial from 1 July 2014.

The \$20 million *Stronger Relationships* trial will help up to 100,000 Australian couples access \$200 towards relationship education and counselling to support strong and healthy relationships.

From 1 July 2014, couples will be able to register online for the \$200 subsidy and use it to access relationship counselling or education to help them work through any problems they may be experiencing in their relationship.

Counselling and education can cover a range of topics such as parenting information, financial management, and conflict resolution.

The 12-month trial will be open to all couples in a committed relationship, including engaged, married, de-facto and same-sex couples.

Who does this impact?

The trial will benefit Australian couples in a committed relationship, including engaged, married, de-facto and same-sex couples, and their families.

Marriage celebrants will be able to refer their clients to the trial to access education and counselling services.

Not-for-profit organisations that provide relationship education and/or counselling to at least 100 couples per year, including service providers, religious organisations and peak bodies, may be eligible to deliver services under the trial.

Key facts

- The \$20 million Stronger Relationships trial starts on 1 July 2014 and will run for one year.
- From 1 July 2014, up to 100,000 couples will be able to register online for a \$200 subsidy towards relationship education or counselling.
- The trial will be open to all couples in a committed relationship, including engaged, married, de-facto and same-sex couples.
- Couples will be able to access relationship education and counselling to support strong and healthy relationships.
- Couples will be able to use their subsidy at an approved not-for-profit service provider of their choice.

More information

For more information about this measure and other Department of Social Services' Budget measures, go to www.dss.gov.au

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