

MEDIA RELEASE



22 December 2010

Christmas cheer for children in foster care on the Fraser Coast

Earlier this week, residents, family and staff at Churches of Christ Care's Fair Haven Maryborough and Fair Haven Hervey Bay Aged Care Services donated more than 100 gifts to Care Pathways, Churches of Christ Care's child protection program.

The array of colourfully wrapped presents were collected and placed under a large Christmas tree in the foyer of Fair Haven Maryborough over a three-and-a-half week period.

Area Director of Nursing and Care Services Lynda Summers said she was overwhelmed with the support shown from residents and staff at both aged care facilities.

"Everyone was so supportive and excited about donating the gifts," Ms Summers said.

"The residents in the independent living units also donated presents, and we asked them to write on the card the age and gender of the child suited to the gift.

"This is the first year we have done this, but we will definitely be making it an annual occurrence."

Care Pathways Service Manager Lisa Roberts said the gifts would be going to their foster children in care on the Fraser Coast.

"With such an extraordinary number of gifts donated, we are hoping to distribute them to as many children as possible," Ms Roberts said.

"We are just thrilled that the residents and staff of the aged care services have opened their hearts this Christmas, and we are very grateful."

Ms Roberts went onto explain that at one of the quarterly meetings between service managers from Care Pathways, Fair Haven Maryborough and Fair Haven Hervey Bay Aged Care Services, and the Maryborough Church of Christ, the possibility of donating gifts was raised.

"We had spoken earlier in the year about the needs of our different services, and I had mentioned that Christmas time was particularly difficult for our foster children," she said.

"These gifts will have a huge impact on the children in care, particularly those coming into care this week and over Christmas. For those foster families who are unprepared, the children will have something for them under the Christmas tree.

"We currently have a group of siblings in foster care who are moving out of the area to live with a family member. Due to the generosity of the donors, we will be able to send gifts with them to open on Christmas day."

Ms Smith added that any gifts not suited to Care Pathways foster children would be donated to the Maryborough Church of Christ to distribute as needed.

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Photos attached:

Caption: Cherylee Baker (Acting Director of Nursing and Care Services for Fair Haven Maryborough, Maryborough Church of Christ Minister David Woodward, Area Director of Nursing and Care Services Lynda Summers and Care Pathways Wide Bay Service Manager Lisa Roberts

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About Churches of Christ Care

Churches of Christ Care is a division of Churches of Christ in Queensland—a group of churches that is part of the worldwide Christian church.

We strive to create an inclusive, caring, compassionate environment that meets its clients' needs without discrimination or prejudice. Everyone is welcome to call on our help regardless of their religious background.

Churches of Christ Care is one of Queensland's leading providers of early childhood, child protection, affordable housing, retirement living and aged care services. We are a not-for-profit organisation that supports more than 27,000 clients each year in urban, rural and remote areas.

We operate 137 services throughout Queensland with the support of more than 2,800 staff and over 700 volunteers.

Churches of Christ Care is built on a foundation of Christian values, commitment to quality care, and trust and respect for clients and the community.