

# MEDIA RELEASE



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## Teachers encourage life long learners

Early childhood is an important stage in a child's education and development, which is why children at Churches of Christ Care's North Buderim Early Childhood Centre are encouraged to learn through play by the centre's registered teachers.

The service, which cares for children from six weeks old to school age, focuses on providing a caring, family oriented environment which encourages enquiring minds and a love of learning.

In 2010, Churches of Christ Care's North Buderim Early Childhood Centre was fortunate to be one of the centres chosen to participate in the Queensland Kindergarten Pilot Program, a Queensland Government initiative to provide every child with access to a kindergarten program by 2014.

Director Rhonda Braxton said the initiative was received so well by children and staff, the centre decided to provide the program for five days a week.

"We employ two teachers, Annelise and Jacinta, who are both very passionate about each child's potential as learners," Ms Braxton said.

"Our centre is currently providing more care and education to our children than is required. The minimum requirement for this government initiative is to have one teacher for 15 hours a week for 40 weeks; however, we have two teachers who cover the whole week. The children took to the initial program really well; they were all excited about it and there was a great deal of communication with parents about the sort of learning through play that occurred. So we decided to make it a permanent program."

The teachers provide children with the opportunity to follow their individual interests and to initiate the activities they wish to engage in.

"Last year, the children created a garden to grow fruit, vegetables, herbs and flowers," Ms Braxton continued.

"The garden still remains a focus of the kindy program and has been extended to support children's interests in insects and other living things that they find in their garden and at home."

In supporting other interests, Ms Braxton said the teachers assisted the children's learning by guiding their investigation through discussion and the use of the internet, books and experimentation to meet the learning outcomes of the curriculum.

"Our approach to teaching through supporting the children's interests often leads to the involvement of their whole family in their learning experiences," she continued.

"Literacy and numeracy are incorporated into all aspects of the kindy program, as is the importance of speaking and listening. Annelise and Jacinta are teaching the children literacy skills starting with recognising the letters of their names, and already some have learnt to

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read and write their names. The children have also begun to take home alphabet books and are collecting pictures of things which start with the letters of their name. This is a fun way of teaching children literacy and also building on their sense of identity and connectedness.

“An example of how literacy and numeracy have been incorporated into the kindy program was in the preparation for Australia Day when the children were reading the book *Possum Magic*. This ignited their interest in our country and culture. Their learning journey has continued to include mapping skills and many of the children are now able to name and locate cities, states and territories on the map of Australia and relating this to their holiday travels.

“The book inspired many cooking projects through which the children have learnt about ingredients, quantities, the concept of capacity and of course, hygiene. The recipes the children used were shared with their families.”

These and the many other daily activities provide children the opportunity to engage in holistic learning experiences, laying a wonderful foundation for school.

Churches of Christ Care’s North Buderim Early Childhood Centre operates an open learning program that compliments the Early Years Learning Framework.

The centre is currently taking enrolments for 2011, and provides long day care Monday to Friday. Parents may choose from one to five days per week.

For more information or to enrol your child, contact Churches of Christ Care’s North Buderim Early Childhood Centre on (07) 5476 8333.

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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 our clients’ needs without discrimination or prejudice. Everyone is welcome to call on our help regardless of their religious background.

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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.