

MEDIA RELEASE



May 2011

A win for local families in Brisbane

Families in the Hawthorne, Balmoral, Bulimba and surrounding areas are all smiles as it is announced that Churches of Christ Care's Hawthorne Limited Hours Early Childhood Centre will retain their government funding for another year.

Churches of Christ Care's Hawthorne Limited Hours Early Childhood Centre, along with many other limited hours childcare centres across Queensland, had their federal government funding cut late last year, and many were facing possible closure as a result.

But after a lot of rallying and letter writing from parents of Churches of Christ Care's limited hours service, and no doubt parents from other limited hours services across the region, the state government announced that they would provide the full funding for the service to continue for another year.

Service Manager Catherine Hardcastle said yesterday that although Churches of Christ Care's Hawthorne Limited Hours Early Childhood Centre would have found a way to remain open, there were other remote limited hours services in Queensland that would have had to shut down if the funding was not renewed.

"This news is very welcome on the back of some very hard lobbying and many stressful hours of worry," Ms Hardcastle said.

"If our funding was cut, our service would have had to look at other childcare options, which would mean we would no longer be able to provide limited hours care.

"We are the only service of our kind in the area so it would have been very unfortunate if this was to change. We have 53 families that use our centre, with 21 children attending each day.

"Many of our children attend with a sibling or extended family member, who, if forced to go elsewhere could be separated due to the age grouping formations of many long hours day care centres.

"Our one room multi-age program allows for families to remain together in the care environment.

"Because we are open four days a week with children attending up to five hours a day, our type of care allows the parents and caregivers the opportunity to participate in part-time work, undertake further study or volunteer in the local community."

The funding for limited hours childcare had been split between the state and federal governments. But the Federal Government cut their portion of funding on 30 December 2010.

Ms Hardcastle said the State Government was able to provide the money to keep the centre open, but those funds were due to run out on June 30 this year.

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“Due to the collaborative efforts of our parents and senior management from Churches of Christ Care, as well as many parents and centres throughout the region, the State Government has said they would provide the full funding for another year,” Ms Hardcastle continued.

“Without the efforts of our dedicated parents who wrote letters and spoke to local politicians, we may not have had the same outcome. We have also received a great deal of support from our local Office for Early Childhood and Care staff who spoke on our behalf regarding the importance and value of the care we provided at Hawthorne.”

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About Churches of Christ Care

Churches of Christ Care are 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.

Churches of Christ Care are one of Queensland's leading providers of early childhood, child protection, affordable housing, and 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 are built on a foundation of Christian values, commitment to quality care, and trust and respect for clients and the community.