



Speech by

Hon. Mike Reynolds

MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE

Hansard Thursday, 20 May 2004

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Child Care Funding

Hon. M.F. REYNOLDS (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety) (10.19 a.m.): The state government knows foster care is not the answer to every vulnerable child's needs. Some young people need an alternative, and the Department of Child Safety is helping make that a reality.

I am encouraging non-government organisations across the state to apply for a share of \$13.2 million in alternative care funding before submissions close in a few weeks. The new funding will boost care for troubled children and young people whose needs are so extreme or unusual that they did not fit into conventional foster families. It will help provide family-based care for children with complex to extreme needs, and non-family based care for children with moderate to extreme needs.

The new funding is part of a total package worth \$58.5 million over three years to increase the number of alternative care places for Queensland's young people in need. The Department of Child Safety's alternative care funding will rise to \$33.6 million in 2006-07. The \$13.2 million is available to organisations keen to participate in the collaborative delivery of specific alternative care services for young Queenslanders, and I am looking forward to receiving a number of submissions.

The state government has already negotiated with existing care service providers in the high need areas of Brisbane, Ipswich and Logan to increase options for placement and support for young people who would otherwise be supported through placement and support packages. These negotiations have resulted in five dedicated placements for children and young people with complex needs in the Ipswich Logan area.

Approval has also been given for \$150,000 for 12 months to continue a dedicated kinship placement service in the Brisbane City region. Information sessions to inform the non-government sector about the funding have been held around the state in Brisbane, the Gold Coast, Caboolture and Redcliffe, Sunshine Coast, Ipswich and Logan, Toowoomba and south-west, Wide Bay and Burnett, Rockhampton, Mackay and Whitsunday, Townsville and Cairns.

Again I encourage organisations to take advantage of this funding and lodge a submission with my department by 5 p.m. on 11 June. Successful applicants will be notified progressively from July this year.