




Speech By
Hon. Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR MCCONNELL

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Kindergarten

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.55 am): The Palaszczuk government's kindy-for-all program is delivering free or cheaper kindy for more than 40,000 Queensland families, delivering real cost-of-living relief and removing cost as a barrier for enrolment in early education.

Across Cairns and the Far North, families are benefiting. For example, at Boopa Werem Community Kindergarten and Preschool in Cairns, 45 families now have access to free kindergarten in 2023, saving these families up to \$3,700 this year, and another three families are getting reduced fees. At Kuranda Community Kindergarten, 12 families now have access to free kindergarten, saving these families up to \$4,500 this year—that is \$112 per week—and another five families are getting reduced fees. At Malanda Community Kindergarten, 17 families have access to free kindy, saving these families up to \$4,440 this year—that is \$110 per week—and another 27 families are getting reduced fees. These savings are making a real difference in the lives of these families. For example, Summer Daley—her child is Avery—at Malanda says—

If she wasn't getting free kindy, she wouldn't be there. They are absolutely wonderful at kindy and Avery just loves the whole thing.

Raylene Lawson—her son is Demani—at Kuranda says—

Kindy has been good. He's learnt a lot and the cost of kindy is ridiculous so free kindy meant that Demani can go. He loves it. He's met new friends and he comes home singing songs like the ABCs. Free kindy is good.

Tamara-Lee Stone, also at Kuranda—her child is Loki—says—

It's been the best thing. It's expanded his friends. Free kindy has helped as we've had financial stress so it made it easier.

Maryanne Stephens—her child is Maria—at Boopa Werem says—

Free kindy is good for family. My child would not be able to attend if we didn't have free kindy.

Another great initiative under kindy for all is our Kindy uplift program to support vulnerable and disadvantaged children. Kindy uplift has been rolled out to around 80 early childhood services across Cairns and the Far North, with more than \$1.6 million in funding allocated this year. We have some great examples of how services in this region have used Kindy uplift funding to support their children. Butterflies Early Learning & Childcare in Mooroolbool and Modern Family in Westcourt, both in Cairns, have used Kindy uplift to support children with language delays. Goodstart Forest Gardens at Mount Sheridan are undertaking professional learning to help foster mental health and wellbeing in their services.

Kindy really is for all children in Queensland, no matter their location, with 95 per cent currently enrolled. That is what kindy for all is all about—delivering cost-of-living relief for Queensland families, early education and support. We are delivering the jobs, infrastructure and services that all Queensland preschool children deserve.