

Question on Notice

No. 1484

Asked on Wednesday, 29 November 2006

MR FENLON MP asked the Minister for Communities, Disability Services, Seniors and Youth (**MR PITT**) -

Will he detail the services available and benefits of, the Department of Communities 'Time for Granparents' program?

ANSWER:

In December 2005, the Queensland Government established the *Time for Grandparents* program.

The \$584,000 a year program provides some respite for grandparents raising children outside the statutory care and protection system by offering grandparents and grandchildren places in camps and recreational activities free of charge. Trained counsellors staff a central '1300' referral line and place clients with a network of proven service providers across Queensland. Contracted services include, Guides Queensland, Scouts Queensland, Queensland Police Citizens Youth Clubs and Sport and Recreation Queensland.

As part of the program, grandparents and grandchildren may attend *Grandfamily Camps*, including specifically designed *Numballie*, or *Indigenous Grandfamily Camps*, which incorporate cultural lessons and life skills such as effective team work and communication. *Grandfamily Camps* offer recreational activities such as rafting, swimming, archery and abseiling. Grandparents also have time to relax, talk with a psychologist and attend information sessions on family law and Centrelink payments. They also have the opportunity to connect with other grandparents who are raising their grandchildren.

Time for Grandparents provides grandparents and their grandchildren the opportunity to participate in activities they may not otherwise be able to become involved in, due to financial constraints. The program aims to increase grandparents' social connections, reducing the likelihood of social isolation. The program also contributes to reducing grandparent stress levels and carer burnout. Most importantly, it offers grandparents the opportunity to take time out from the rigours of full-time care.