

MOONEE PONDS

Deal will assist parent support

COMMITTED TO BACK SERVICES

THE Caroline Chisholm Society has welcomed a State Government commitment to fund intensive in-home early childhood support services for vulnerable children and programs to build parents' resilience.

The initiatives are part of \$33.8 million of service funding allocated under the government's Roadmap for Reform, released last week following the Victorian Royal Commission's report into family violence.

The Caroline Chisholm Society is a non-profit organisation that provides support and counselling services for disadvantaged families in Moonee Ponds and surrounding areas.

Society chief executive Helen Cooney said she welcomed the new intensive service for expectant and new families.

"I look forward to working with the Government on a model that builds on the skills of midwives and maternal and child health nurses," she said.

"If this new service gives

them a non-stigmatising place to suggest families can go for help without a long waiting list, it's worked."

Ms Cooney said helping build parents' resilience was also important.

"It's incredibly difficult to find money for evidence-based programs that teach practical parenting skills," she said.

"These programs are often seen as fluffy, but culture classes help with recovery from trauma and cooking classes help with nutrition – and at the same time they offer a very simple way to offer a non-stigmatising entry point for more intensive services."

Ms Cooney said services needed to be accessible.

"It should be as easy as this – if you're pregnant you get yourself to a GP and you talk to the midwife and you work with a maternal and child health nurse," she said.

"It has to be intuitive and the support team at the entry point need to know how to navigate the rest."