



supporting pregnancy, children and families

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*** MEDIA RELEASE ***

Childcare and kinder teachers get new resources and a new Network to help work with vulnerable families.

Child Safety Commissioner, Bernie Geary, will launch new resources and a new Western Vulnerable Families Network at Maribyrnong Council Offices, Footscray at 1.30pm on Monday 17 September 2012.

The resources are a local "e-resource" listing supports available in the western suburbs of Melbourne and a trauma and development guide.

The event was the culmination of two years work at the Caroline Chisholm Society to better link family and early parenting services with childcare and kindergarten across Hobsons Bay, Maribyrnong, Melbourne, Moonee Valley and Wyndham council areas.

Mr Geary, a long time advocate for vulnerable children said "The importance of professionals working together across sectors cannot be underestimated in contributing to the lives of vulnerable children".

Managed by Tamba Watts and Sue Farrugia and funded by the Department of Human Services, the project operated under the auspice of the Western Child FIRST Alliance. Across the state, projects of this kind were initiated to better link universal early years services with family services following the recommendation of a 2010 child death inquiry.

Helen Cooney, the CEO of Caroline Chisholm Society, said "Through greater awareness of family services, early childhood services will now be better able to respond to the needs of vulnerable children in Melbourne's west." Ms Cooney said "This is helped in particular by a new E-Resource and information package for staff in early years and child and family services in our local area."

Project managers, Tamba Watts and Sue Farrugia, said "We're really pleased that the Network we initiated will continue to operate as the new Western Vulnerable Children's Network. It's become very clear to us that you can't just tell people what services are available, you must have networking opportunities to improve the relationships between the people who care for and engage with vulnerable children and their families"

A full report from the project is available.

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