



# New Grants for 43 Children's Service Projects

The Minister for Social Security, Senator Don Grimes, recently announced that he had approved grants for 43 children's services projects under the Children's Services Program.

Senator Grimes referred to the announcement in the Budget that the Government would be providing \$10 million in 1983/84 for high priority new and expanded projects and initiatives under the Program. "A large number of projects has been identified", the Minister said, "and today's approval of projects rated as being of the highest priority will be the forerunner of other approvals to be announced progressively".

The Minister then gave details of the number of services in each State and estimated costs. "The 43 grants will cost in excess of \$2.175 million in a full year. Additional day care places for some 1,465 children will be provided", he said. Although only one grant has been provided for N.S.W. further grants are presently being considered and will be announced shortly.

The Minister continued: "There are not yet sufficient day care places available in Australia, nor are there sufficient services related to the needs of low income families.

"The Government will therefore be seeking added flexibility under the Children's Services Program so that these needs can be met more effectively. We shall be encouraging new and existing service sponsors to extend the range of services they provide so that by their multi-functional nature they might more adequately meet the needs of families.

"To this end, I have decided to abandon the use of the terms, 'mainstream'

and 'non-mainstream', as adopted by the previous Government in determining its priorities under the Children's Services Program. I believe 'non-mainstream' in particular has a negative connotation and has served to inhibit the development of a flexible range of children's services which the present Government considers to be so vital".

The Minister added that work was proceeding in his Department on a planning approach to funding under the Children's Services Program. "The 'submission model' approach, which has tended to favour the articulate and those with the resources to devote to submission writing, is to evolve into a 'planning model' approach which will allow areas of greatest need to be identified", he said. "Data relating to the supply of and demand for day care services are being collected and analysed and the process of associated consultations with State, Local government and community organisations has commenced."

## BACKGROUND NOTES ON CHILDREN'S SERVICES PROGRAM 1983/84.

\* The 1983/84 Budget allocation for the Children's Services Program for services other than pre-schools is \$85.86 million, an increase of \$20.91 million or about 33% over the previous year's expenditure.

\* An amount of \$10 million has been allocated for high priority new and expanded projects and initiatives.

\* The implementation of revised funding arrangements for day care services aimed at ensuring that economically needy families are not denied access to care because of costs is continuing. A new fee rebating arrangement for economically needy users, known as

Special Economic Need Subsidy (SENS), was introduced in January 1983.

\* Upon taking office the Government decided that the guidelines for day care fee relief developed by the former Government should continue subject to:—

- \* the deletion of a minimum fee provision; and
- \* an extensive review during 1983.

The fee relief review process has taken the form of an interdepartmental committee and extensive community consultation.

\* As a focus for the community consultation the Minister recently approved a grant of up to \$22,000 to the National Association of Community Based Children's Services to mount a forum in Canberra from 19-21 September, 1983. The forum will be attended by individuals from the day care field throughout Australia representing a range of views and service types.

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