An integrated approach to early learning and care

6 October 2014

The Country Liberals Government is continuing its push to improve results in remote schools by integrating early childhood services.

The Maningrida community can now access early childhood, health and parenting support services from their new remote Child and Family Centre. The centre was one of five constructed across the Territory through a National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Early Childhood Development with the Commonwealth Government.

Minister for Education Peter Chandler said the Territory Government is investing $3.4 million to provide services through the child and family centres.

The Department of Education is collaborating with both government and non-government providers to deliver integrated early childhood services from the Maningrida centre, including Families as First Teachers (FaFT), a Crèche and the Healthy Kids Under 5 program.

“These services could soon be complemented by a number of other family support programs after negotiations with the community are completed.” Mr Chandler said.

“To manage the centre and co-ordinate these services the Education Department has funded a centre manager and an Indigenous co-ordinator to work with the local community.

“For the first time all these valuable services will be offered through a single location making it easier for the people from Maningrida to get the help they need.”

Local Member for Arafura Francis Xavier Kurrupuwu said the Maningrida community have been calling out for a one stop shop to deliver child and family services.

“Maningrida is a community with many young parents so it is good there is now a safe place for them to get the help and information they need,” Mr Kurrupuwu said.

“The Families as First Teachers Program also allows children and parents to engage with the local school from an early stage so they are not scared and are ready to learn when it comes time to start Transition.
“An added advantage to having all these services in one location will improve the standard of early childhood education and care, and professionals will be on hand to assess things like hearing and learning difficulties so they can be dealt with before students begin school. This will result in kids getting better results.”

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