$3.7 MILLION TO BRING DOWN CHILD CARE COSTS

The NT Government is providing $3.7 million in child care subsidies in 2005/06 to help families with the cost of child care in the Northern Territory.

The NT is the only jurisdiction in Australia to provide the Child Care Subsidy Scheme. The funds are paid directly to licensed child care centres to help them keep costs down for families.

In meeting its election commitment to increase the Child Care subsidy the Government increased the weekly subsidy by $7.50 per child in 2002. The weekly subsidy is now $20.20 per child for children over two and $27.37 for every child under two.

“The NT Government is supporting Territory families to get ahead,” Family and Community Services Minister Marion Scrymgour said.

“We have reduced the cost of child care for parents and we have reduced the costs for child care centres.

“In the three years since the subsidy was increased, child care places in the Territory have increased by 40%.

“The whole idea of the decision to increase the subsidy was to increase the availability and affordability of child care, and on both counts it has been proven a spectacular success.

“A 40% increase means that 937 more children are in child care centres than two years ago – this is an outstanding success, and the NT Government is proud to continue its support to the scheme.”

The funding of Child Care is a Federal Government responsibility.

“Child Care is a Howard Government responsibility but a Martin Labor Government priority.

“It is no coincidence that the Northern Territory Government is the only Government to provide a subsidy and that child care is more affordable in the Northern Territory than anywhere else in Australia”

Ms Scrymgour said that the Child Care subsidy was all about strengthening families and making the Territory a better place to raise a family.
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