HELPING THE FAMILY BUDGET BY UP TO $2145

13 May 2014

Budget 2014 will save a family with three children up to $2145 a year through increased childcare subsidies, a boost to sports vouchers and the Back to School payment.

Treasurer, Dave Tollner, said this year’s Budget aims to lower the cost of living for families. “The Government has boosted support in key areas that represent real value for parents and more opportunities for our children,” Mr Tollner said.

“No other Government provides this level of financial support for its families.”

The Budget provides a total of $5.9 million for enhanced child care subsidies, including an additional $1.7 million to expand the scheme to include family day care and an increase in the subsidy of 10 per cent.

Expanding the scheme to include Family Day Care means an additional 1000 Territory children will be eligible for the scheme.

The subsidy contributes about $1445 per year towards the cost of day care for a child under two.

“The Country Liberals introduced the Child Care Subsidy and is proud to not only expand it so more families can take advantage of its benefits, but to also increase it across the board,” Mr Tollner said.

In another measure designed to lower the cost of living, the Government has increased the spending to the highly successful Sports Voucher scheme, increasing the annual payment from $75 to $200 per child.

Mr Tollner said this $5 million initiative will ease the financial burden on families and provide even better value with the scheme also expanded to include more activities.

“The Sports Voucher will now cover activities such as dance, music lessons and other artistic and cultural pursuits to ensure Territory kids can participate in their favourite sport or recreational activity.

“The scheme will also be expanded to cover swimming lessons for children up to five years old not enrolled in school who have completed the Government’s Under 5 Water Safety Awareness Program.”

In addition, the $6.6 million Back to School payment will continue to provide $150 payments per student across all Territory schools to help parents with expenses such as school uniforms and textbooks.

Mr Tollner said for a family of three children, two school age and one under two in childcare, this equates to a saving of about $2145 to the household budget.
“Budget 2014 delivers real, accessible and substantial assistance to parents to help deal with cost of living pressures. These measures mean more of a family’s money can go towards what they want to spend it on knowing that these measures are saving them money.”

The Government will also continue its subsidy of electricity prices, spending $59.49 million for residential and small to medium business customers in the Territory to continue to have the fourth lowest electricity prices in the country.

The subsidy effectively provides an average of $176 per quarterly power bill or $705 annually.

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