

# Daycare to offer kindy services

Tanya Chilcott  
SCHOOLS REPORTER

CHILDREN in long-daycare centres will be given access to a qualified teacher and kindergarten services from next year under a State Government pilot and shake-up of the sector.

Up to 100 long-daycare centres will receive funding in 2010, allowing them to provide qualified kindergarten services.

It comes as Queensland lags behind all other states and territories in the number of kindergarten hours provided to children.

A Federal Government report shows only 29 per cent of eligible Queensland children were provided with 12.8 kindergarten hours in 2007 to 2008.

Every other state and territory had more than 80 per cent of eligible children participating in kindergarten or preschool for at least 10 hours a week.

Last year the Bligh Government signed a National Partnership for Early Childhood Education Agreement (NPECEA) in which they ensured every child would have access to a quality early childhood education program by 2013.

Queensland Education Minister Geoff Wilson (pictured) said the pilot gave State Government funding to the long-daycare sector for the first time.

Under the pilot, centres that offer kindergarten services will receive \$1200 for each eligible child to help offset costs.

"More than half of Queensland's kindy-aged children attend long-daycare centres," Mr

Wilson said. "Just 7 per cent of them are taking part in a kindergarten program taught by a qualified teacher."

"Having a kindergarten program combined with the convenience of a long-daycare will be great for working parents who want their children to access quality early education."

Childcare Queensland president Gwynn Bridge said the funding recognised her sector's "critical role" in education.

Early Childhood Teachers Association president Kim Walters welcomed the funding but said Queensland still had "a long way to go" in achieving the same early childhood education standards as other states.

The pilot funding, together with money already provided to C&K preschools and the building of 240 extra kindergarten services around the state, will be worth about \$100 million next year.

In 2011 the funding model for C&K centres will change, with a subsidy going to each eligible-aged child enrolled, with extra subsidies provided to address disadvantage.

Mr Wilson said parents would be asked for their feedback on the early childhood education initiatives.

The Federal Government announced late last year Queensland would receive \$252 million in Commonwealth funding over five years under the NPECEA.

## Humpty gets unscrambled

ACCIDENT-prone nursery rhyme character Humpty Dumpty has been given a happier ending thanks to some controversial tweaking of his story by the BBC.

Britain's public broadcaster changed the words to the 1810 rhyme for one of its children's

shows so all those who couldn't "put Humpty together again" after his great fall could now make "Humpty happy again".

The BBC has previously changed popular nursery rhymes. In *Little Miss Muffet* the little girl becomes friends with the eight-legged creature.

HUNK SUPPORT: Mitchell Johnson (left), Nathan Bracken (below left) and Shane Watson are among the players appearing in a calendar to raise funds for the McGrath Foundation.

## Aussie cricketer calendar aims to bowl maidens over

John Barker

WHAT would The Don think?

As the summer approaches, our cricketers have revealed (almost) all in a new calendar sure to generate pitch fever amongst female fans.

The 3 Mobile Men of Cricket calendar is the second instalment of an idea created to raise money for the McGrath Foundation.

Last year's calendar raised \$50,000 towards the placement of McGrath breast cancer nurses – and increased awareness of the disease.

While the Australian team is set to

dazzle this summer in series against Pakistan and the West Indies, off the field players including Nathan Bracken, Shane Watson, Mitchell Johnson, Simon Katich and Shaun Tait stripped for the cameras in a selection of sexy photos by photographer and former Olympian, Simon Upton.

"They were right in to the spirit of the calendar, really relaxed and comfortable," Upton said.

Australian bowling legend and McGrath Foundation chairman Glenn McGrath, who lost wife Jane to breast cancer, was grateful the cricketers had been so bold for the cause.

"I'm blown away that everyone continues to offer so much support to the McGrath Foundation," he said.

And while McGrath jokes that he isn't surprised to see Shane Watson (Mr January) fronting the cameras for a second time, he was "super impressed" Simon Katich (Mr October) backed up.

"He was certainly popular last year."

You can get the calendar for \$29.95 from today at 3 mobile stores, online via 3's website [www.three.com.au/menofcricket](http://www.three.com.au/menofcricket) and at 3 mobile Test matches.



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