

*Att: Hon. Julia Gillard AC*

*Royal Commission into Early Childhood Education and Care*

*via email to RoyalCommissionECEC@sa.gov.au*

*23<sup>Rd</sup> March 2023*

### **Written Submission to the Royal Commission into Early Childhood Education and Care**

Dear Commissioner Gillard and Commission Staff,

We write to the Royal Commission to express our thoughts and experiences of early childhood education and care in our local region – the Southern Yorke Peninsula.

Our group is pleased that so many of the complexities, lack of access and disadvantage faced by regional communities across South Australia have the opportunity to be heard and inform solutions moving forward. In our experience, many of the most basic supports that should be available to young children and their families simply do not exist in our region. This greatly impacts developmental outcomes and intergenerational life trajectories for our local community.

The Yorke Peninsula (YP) Council area is vast, with a population of around 11,800 spread over 5,800km square. There are 42 townships spread across our council area, with key services such as Centrelink and major hospitals up to two hour's drive away for the most isolated of our communities. Approximately 480 children under the age of 5 reside in our region. At present, there are no long day care centres anywhere in our council region. Two small Department for Education Rural Care services exist, co-located with preschools, at Yorketown (14 Rural Care enrolment spaces per day) and Maitland (4 Rural Care enrolment spaces per day). One family day care service exists at Yorketown (though this provider is due to retire), and a handful of nannies provide private services.

Our group came together in 2020 in frustration and despair, after attempting to manage working from home and various other arrangements to maintain our professions while raising young children. Our group consists of Amy Honner (Speech Pathologist), Anna Phasey (Learning Together Educator and Entrepreneur), Katie Hughes (Social Worker) and Nadia Slade (Small Business Owner). All of us hold expertise and qualifications that allow us to contribute to our local communities, however the complete lack of childcare accessibility in our region made the return to any form of work extremely difficult. Each of us have relocated to the YP, a common scenario in our community, therefore do not have extended family support.

Amy, Katie and Anna in particular work with young families in our region, namely those most disadvantaged, and see time and time again families falling through the cracks with no access to services that could build their capacity to support their children's development. The local Child and Family Health Service (CaFHS) has always operated with two to three nurses in our region, but for the last 12 months one CaFHS nurse has attempted to cover the whole YP Council region working 0.7FTE. In 2022 wait times for a CaFHS appointment

blew out to almost 3 months. It is important to note within the YP Council area there are no paediatricians, lactation consultants, specialist nurses etc permanently based on the YP that can fill the gaps when essential services such as CaFHS are not readily available. Even more importantly, the vital mother's groups that CaFHS facilitated in the past no longer exist. These crucial informal networks often positively support maternal mental health and provide opportunities to grow community particularly for those women who have moved to the region and do not have family support nearby.

Over the course of 2020 and 2021, we released two surveys to capture data relating to community need for childcare. We had many anecdotal stories, including our own, but needed solid data as to the extent of the need in our region. We were inundated with responses from over 170 families (please see attachment 1: SYP 2020 Child Care Results). Over 190 children in our region at that time were identified as requiring care, but only 31.7% of those children were able to access formal care options – and in many instances not the amount of days/hours families needed.

Armed with this information, we honestly did not know where to turn next. We spoke with the Department for Education, Private Providers, Family Day Care and our local council – however no singular entity is responsible or accountable for the provision of this essential service. Each organisation was very willing to pass on details of other organisations that may be able to help, but we found ourselves in the hamster wheel feeling as though we were pushing mud uphill with no one willing to facilitate conversation that may lead to a solution. What we quickly realised was that no changes to increase of capacity of Rural Care services in our region were going to be on the table, yet private providers and local council felt we did not have the numbers to support a business case for the establishment of a purpose-built centre and service.

We felt differently - that we did have the number of enrolments required to support the establishment of a service *if* a suitable site from which to run a service was available. In our first survey, Minlaton was identified as the preferred location for most families if a childcare centre were to be established. With encouragement from our local State MP Fraser Ellis, we released a secondary survey to gather specific data on enrolment interest if a long day care was established at Minlaton.

Local families were quick to show their support with robust data providing unquestionable evidence that there was a strong local need and desire for long day care at Minlaton. To meet the reported need over 80 enrolment places would be required each day. The number of children requiring care was far beyond the capacity of our local council to manage a council-run service, yet any private provider would be taking a risk to set up business in our region without a facility from which to operate their service. The data from our second survey in 2021, along with numerous letters of support from families, community members, businesses and organisations provided the evidence which allowed our local Council to apply for grants to build a centre. Our findings were validated upon the release of the Mitchell Institute's *Childcare Deserts* report (2022) – our region is one of the worst for accessible child care in Australia. We were elated when our local council were successful in gaining funding to build a childcare centre in Minlaton through the Black Summer Bushfire Recovery grants program in February 2022. This grant was awarded only after our region experienced an incredibly frightening and destructive fire in 2019.

Watching the project develop has been so rewarding. Construction of the centre began this year, and our group has provided support through Selection Panel input and ongoing consulting with the successful private provider - Yorke Peninsula Learning and Care. The past three years have involved *hundreds, if not thousands of voluntary hours* from each of us, and we wish to highlight to the Royal Commission that it has only been since our youngest children began preschool and school, that each of us felt we had the capacity and persistence to proceed with advocating for increased childcare options for our community. We will not personally benefit from the childcare service we have been advocating so strongly for.

Our journey has been relatively short. While at times we all wanted to give up and felt as though we were banging our heads against brick walls, we also acknowledge that this project has progressed quickly with the incredible support of our council. We feel immensely saddened for those communities still advocating and working their way along this journey with no result in sight. We are in contact with many of these groups, some parents have been volunteering more than eight years advocating for their regions. Examples include townships of Chrystal Brook, Ardrossan, Port Broughton, Tumbly Bay and Orroroo. Holding the hopes and emotions of a region's caregivers struggling daily with no supports is not an easy task. We also acknowledge that our specific skill sets allowed us to engage and collaborate with our community to develop the data and evidence base essential to the success of this project.

As part of the grants application process, YP Council commissioned a Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA). The CBA demonstrated that for every \$1 spent on the Southern Yorke Peninsula Community childcare project, over \$50 would return to community. The consultant who developed the CBA, along with local Regional Development Australia (RDA) staff, very rarely see a CBA with such solid return numbers.

Aside from the incredible financial boost this project will give our region, we are excited to see the changes for our wider community. Children attending quality early learning and care that supports their social, emotional, and physical needs. Early detection and intervention for children and families requiring support. Support for parents in the early years, including facilities from which to run parenting education and support programs. Nurses who no longer need to come home from night shift only to care for their toddler and pre-schooler when they should be sleeping. Teachers, Doctors, Lawyers and other essential members of our community who will now have the choice to contribute to the workforce if they wish. The capacity for our community to volunteer to support essential services such as our local CFS, SES and Ambulance. Caregivers who will have the chance to pursue learning and study opportunities. Grandparents who can now stay in the workforce as they are no longer required to care for their grandchildren weekly. Flourishing small business and entrepreneurial business pursuits that will add vibrancy to our region with a more flexible workforce.

These positive flow-on effects (and many more that remain unmentioned) are deserved by **all** regional communities. We implore the Royal Commission to strongly consider how our regional and rural communities can be better supported in the early years - starting with equitable access to quality learning and care.

Thank you for taking the time to read our submission. We look forward to representing our project and wider regional South Australian communities at the Royal Commission hearing on the 14<sup>th</sup> April.

Warmest regards,



Katie Hughes,

*Amy Honner & Anna Phasey, on behalf of the Southern Yorke Peninsula Childcare Feasibility Group*

# SYP CHILD CARE SURVEY

---

## RESULTS



# Table of Contents:

---

- Aims and vision
- Response overview
- Access to care
- Barriers facing families
- Benefits
- Looking to the future
- Comments from families
- Contact details



# Aims and Vision

---

We are a small group of passionate parents and child-focused professionals. For many years now we have observed the struggles of families within our Southern Yorke Peninsula (SYP) community to find adequate care for their children.

Experiencing these same issues ourselves, we have embarked on a journey to advocate for accessible child care options for our community.

Our aim is for all families to be able to access the child care that they require. The provision of quality child care on the SYP is not only an investment in our children's learning and development, but an investment in the future growth and prosperity of our region.

# Response Overview

175 families responded to our online survey, spread via word of mouth on Facebook.

The majority of families live closest to Minlaton (70), followed by Yorketown (36), Stansbury (25), Curramulka (15), Warooka (11), Pt Turton (15), Edithburgh (7), Port Vincent (5) and Hardwicke Bay (3). We requested families select their closest town, as many live on farming properties.

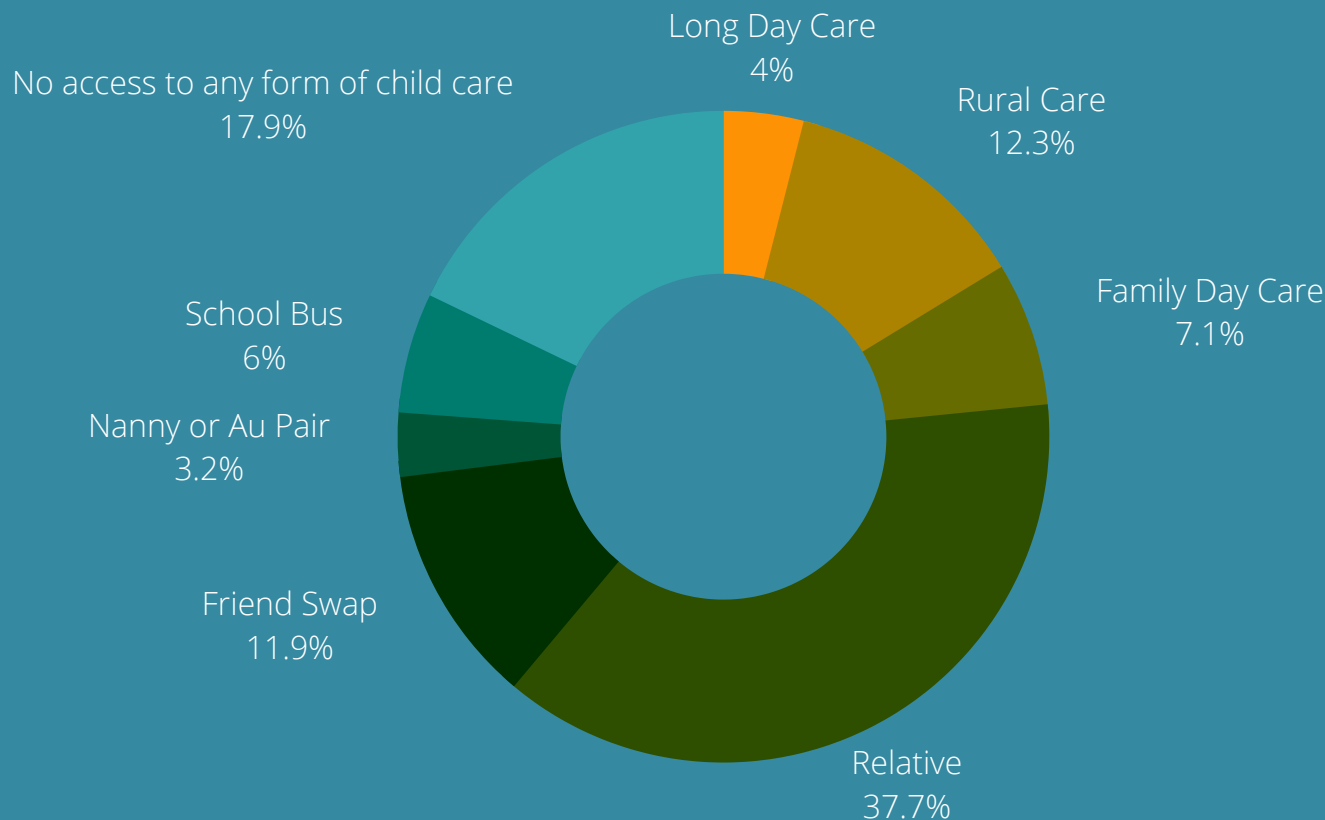


There are 195 children aged 4 and under (including those currently pregnant) who will require some form of child care according to our survey responses. A further 26 families noted that they are planning future pregnancy/ies.

There are an additional 163 children aged between 5-12, whose families expressed a strong need for Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) and school holiday care options. There are currently minimal OSHC and school holiday care options available to families of the SYP, (limited spaces at Yorketown Community Children's Centre and a privately run OSHC at Stansbury).

# Access to Care

Fig. 1: Current access to care options



As can be seen in Fig. 1, only a small percentage of families are currently able to access formal child care options (Long Day Care, Rural Care or Family Day Care, 31.7%). The vast majority of parents are having to rely on informal care options including relatives, friends and even placing children on the longest routes of school buses!

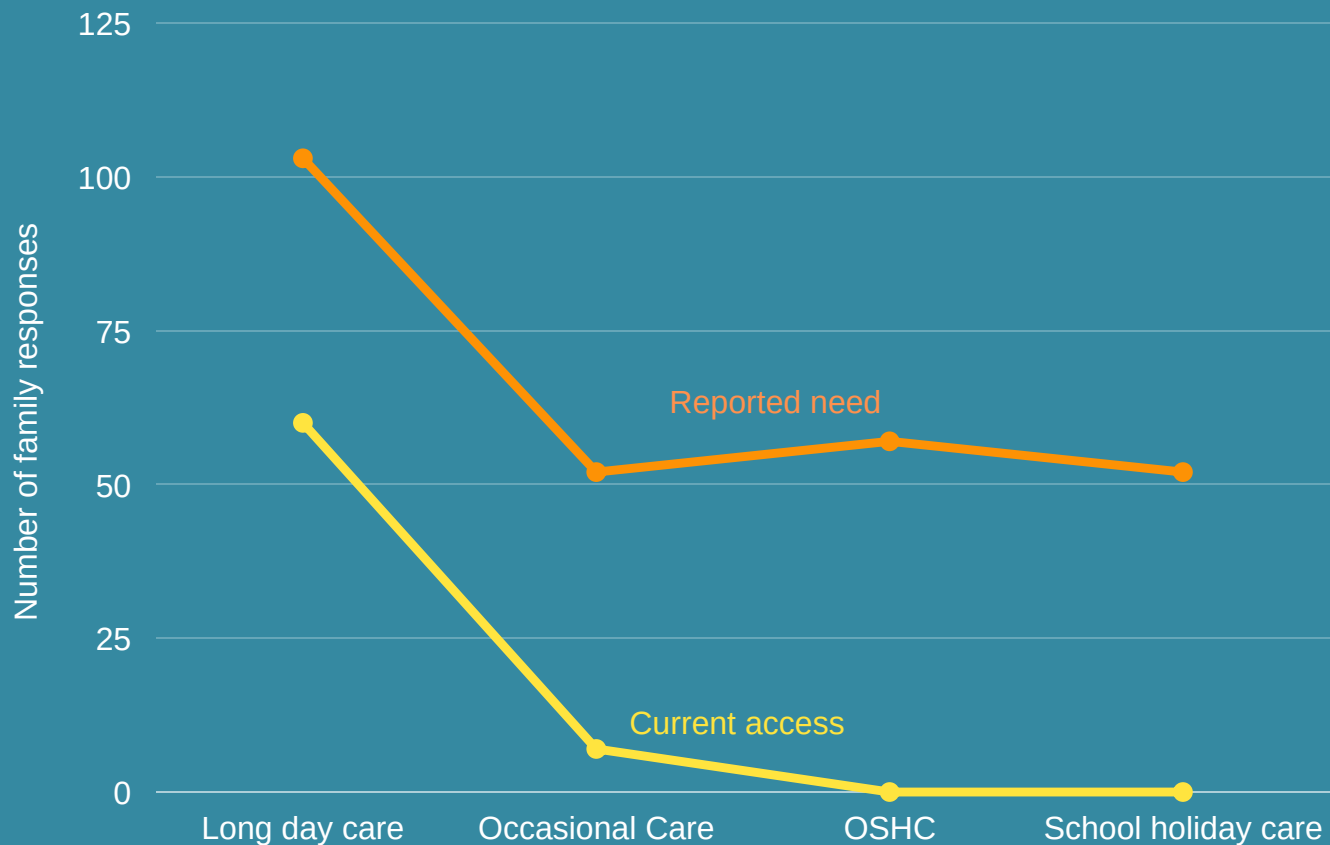
45 families (17.9% of respondents) reported having **no access to any** of the child care options listed, including informal options such as family or friends.

Anecdotally, many families reported extensive wait lists for Rural Care and Family Day Care. Currently, Rural Care at the Yorketown Community Children's Centre is the only long day care facility on the SYP, south of Maitland. Rural Care services an area of over 5,000 square km, with a population of over 11,000 including 445 children aged 0-4 (2016 Census Quickstats). Many families travel up to an hour to drop their children off at the centre, which has the capacity to care for 15 children each day.

*"No care options available. No offers of care despite being on a waiting list for in excess of 12 months."*



Fig 2: Current access vs need



The graph above (Fig 2) provides a brief snapshot of current access to care, vs need. It is important to note responses were per family - not the number of children requiring care.

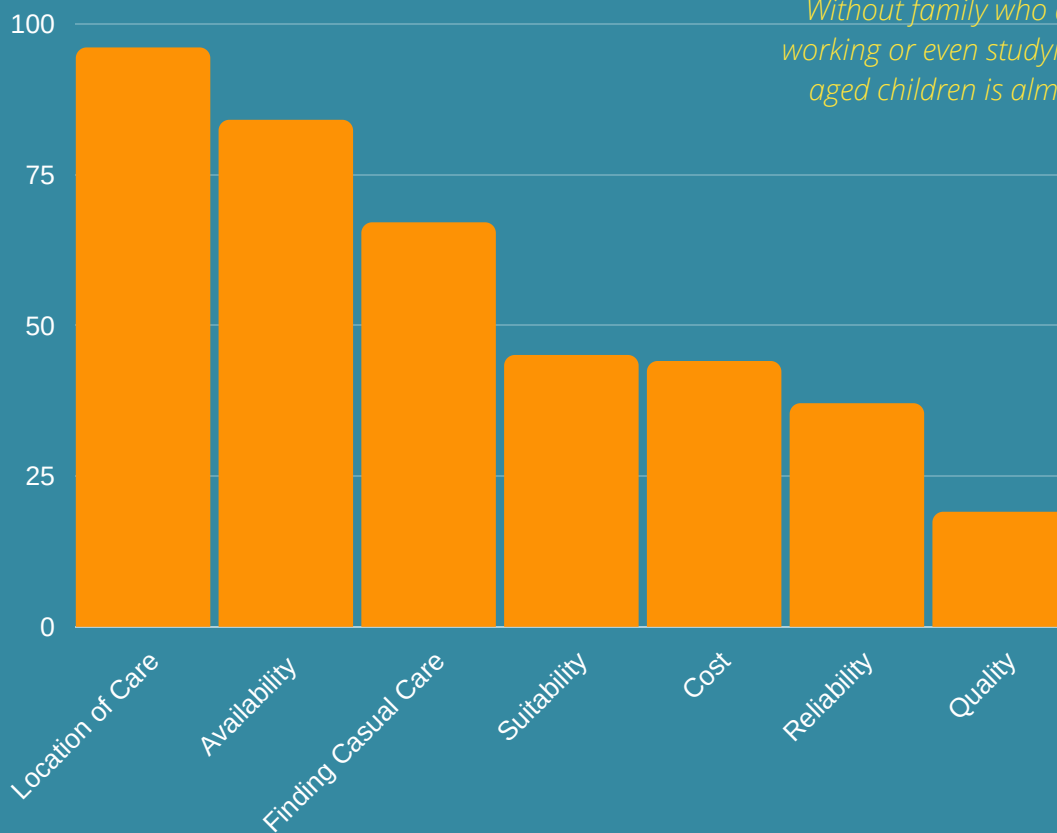
For those able to access long day care (including Rural Care and Family Day Care), 60 families were able to access **some** level of care, whereas 102 families reported needing the service. Of those able to access long day care, a large majority reported that they were unable to obtain the amount of days/hours they would ideally like.

Many SYP families (52) would appreciate access to occasional care services. Minlaton Kindergarten offers two short occasional care services each Friday, but the reported need for this service far outweighs current accessibility. Yorketown Community Children's Centre also offers casual spaces when possible.

There is a severe lack of OSHC and School holiday care options, with 57 families requiring these services. Currently there is very limited availability at Yorketown Community Children's Centre, as well as a privately run service at Stansbury. None of the families who responded to our survey reported currently accessing OSHC or School holiday care.

# Barriers Facing Families

Fig. 3: Issues with current care options



*"There is no care in Minlaton that can be accessed reliably on an ongoing basis. Without family who are able to help, working or even studying with preschool aged children is almost impossible."*

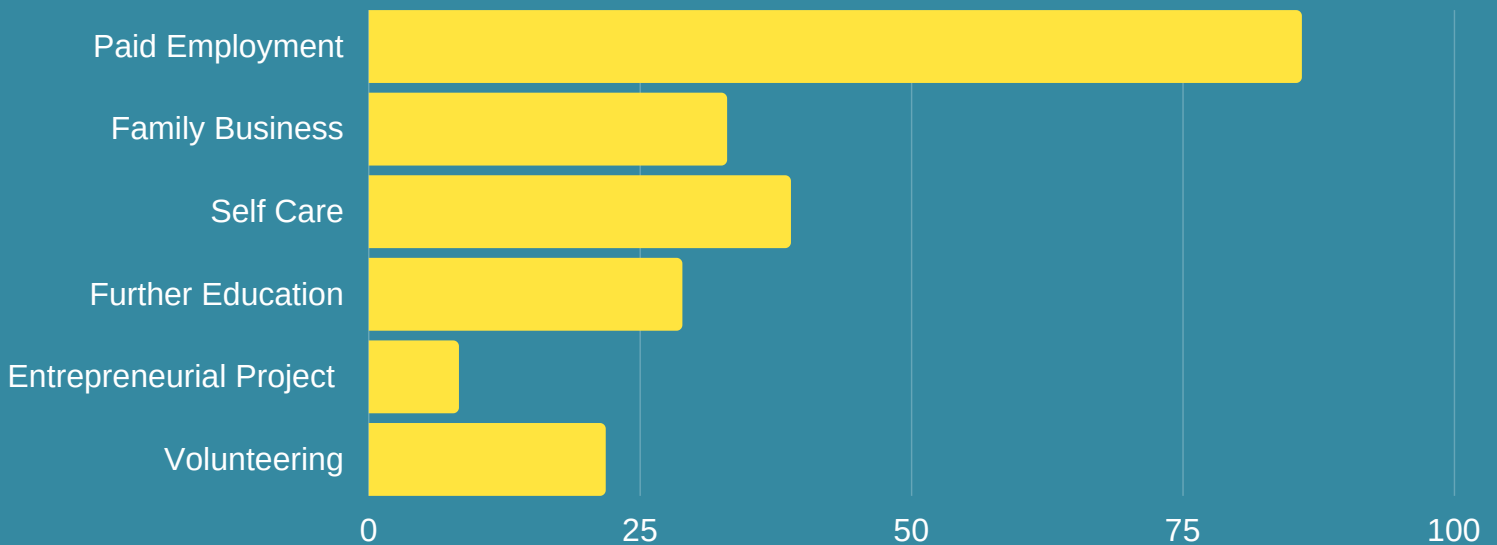
Location and availability of care are by far the biggest barriers facing families of the SYP (see Fig. 3). Many families are unable to access care on the days that they are required to work. Families are travelling long distances to access care, up to 50km each way, often having to double back to then attend work.

Extensive waiting lists and Rural Care working at full capacity means there is very limited availability for parents to access casual care when required (for example, to partake in seasonal work, medical appointments, etc).

According to our survey responses, when given the choice between Minlaton and Yorketown for the potential location of a new child care centre, 86 families would prefer Minlaton, with 43 families preferring Yorketown.

# Benefits

Fig. 4: Benefits of accessing child care



The benefits of accessible child care are many and varied. At an individual level, 146 respondents (85.88%) stated that access to child care would allow them to engage in paid employment, or increase the hours that they are working. A further 56 (32.94%) stated that child care would allow them to contribute to the family business. In a region where farming and small business is so crucial - the financial impact of a lack of appropriate child care cannot be underestimated.

Self care (66 - 38.82%) is imperative for good mental health. For those without a support network, particularly in the current COVID-19 climate, a lack of available child care makes it incredibly hard to shop for groceries, or attend a medical appointment - particularly if the medical appointment involves a 6-hour day trip to Adelaide.

Many services within rural communities operate only due to the commitment of volunteers. 37 families (21.51% of respondents) reported that access to care would allow them to volunteer within their community.

Comments from those responding to our survey highlighted the financial strain their family was facing, frustration that their qualifications, skills and experience were not being utilised, lack of opportunity for their child to socialise with peers, and impacts of these stressors on relationships. From a child protection and wellbeing perspective, access to quality care is imperative for the safety, care and protection of our most vulnerable children.

Creating opportunities to further education, and supporting those who wish to develop an entrepreneurial passion project must be a priority for our SYP community. With the shift to online learning, working remotely and a focus on domestic tourism we must embrace the opportunities that present to our community, and creating accessible child care is a crucial consideration.

*"Being able to go back to helping on the farm more, especially days I'm needed but don't have an option to leave my child for a few hours."*

# Looking to the Future

---

We have the data to support that there is a significant lack of care options available to families of the SYP area. Our focus now turns to increasing accessibility to child care so that:

- Parents are able to return to work.
- Children are able to access environments that enhance their education.
- Vulnerable children and families that are at increased risk, can access safe and supportive care.
- Young families and professionals can relocate to the area, not only to work but to stay and build a life on the SYP.
- Economic and social opportunities for the SYP community increase through the establishment of accessible care.

If the SYP is going to have quality professionals across health, education, farming, small business etc, then providing child care is a key component to attracting and retaining these professionals. The results of our survey conclude that the strongest need for child care is in the township of Minlaton, and that child care availability will increase in Yorketown if a centre were to be built in Minlaton.

As a group we are now approaching interested private providers that may consider establishing quality child care in the township of Minlaton, however we encourage the exploration of all options that may help to fill the need for child care in our wider region. Gaps in care not only exist in long day care, but in the provision of occasional care, OSHC and school holiday care also. Rural and remote communities are well known for their resilience and resourcefulness. We hope that the sharing of the above information will inspire further discussion regarding this important issue, lay the foundations for creative solutions, and turn our vision of accessible child care on the SYP into a reality.

# Comments from families

As part of the survey, participants were given the opportunity to comment on their experiences of accessing child care on the SYP, and whether their preference would be Yorketown or Minlaton. As previously stated, 86 families would prefer Minlaton, with 43 families preferring Yorketown.

Can't get full day care anywhere, as there are waiting lists.

I am aware that young families choose not to come to Minlaton due to the lack of opportunities for childcare and being able to follow job opportunities

I travel over 1 hour to send and collect my child from childcare. It is an expectation here that you will have to travel to be able to get any sort of care so I will take it wherever I can!

There was none available so I was unable to work until my children were school age and even then I had to find work within school hours as no after school care available.

I know lots of working Mums in Minlaton who are screaming out for care. These women are fantastic in their professions and it's a great loss to not have them working due to care issues.

Yes, I have a Bachelor degree with Honours. Living in Minlaton I did not work because the logistics of arranging childcare prevented me from doing so. We did not have family locally to rely on for care and there was no OSHC available.

I am afraid this is one of the reasons we are moving back to Adelaide...

Simply getting a space in any form of care.

One of the reasons (among many) that we are moving back to Adelaide is the total lack of suitable, regular child care. I have no family here and it is extremely hard to run a business and be a FIFO partner with a small child.

We are so restricted with our child care options on SYP - besides looking at how this affects us as parents, it is disappointing that our children have limited access to early childhood education prior to Kindy.

I am an Occupational Therapist. I could be working more days but have no access to child care. May have to give up work if I can't find child care.

I am a permanent teacher on maternity leave, currently unable to return to work as I can only get 1 day of child care.

There are no options, I would take anything.

My employer is Adelaide based and supportive of me working remotely but I am unable to work from home as no access to long day care.

Minlaton would be a great central spot for a lot of families. I know a lot of Mums are very stressed as they have to go back and fill their contract after maternity leave and have no one to watch their kids... very stressful for mums!

Minlaton would benefit immensely from a childcare centre. It is a central location and a major employment centre in the district.

Minlaton needs childcare. I have been commuting to Yorketown rural care with my three children over the last eight years. They are a fantastic centre, but the southern Yorke peninsula needs another centre to accommodate those who can't get a spot.

# Contact details

---

Our small group of concerned parents are steadfast in our vision to see child care availability increase on the SYP. We are more than happy to respond to emails, answer phone calls or arrange to meet in person if you would like any further information.

SYP Child Care Feasibility Group  
sypchildcare@hotmail.com

Nadia Slade  
Ph: 0419 176 040  
Email: [nadia@nadiabrownconsulting.com.au](mailto:nadia@nadiabrownconsulting.com.au)

Katie Hughes  
Ph: 0429 166 392  
Email: [hughestk@hotmail.com](mailto:hughestk@hotmail.com)

Amy Honner  
Ph: 0419 111 086  
Email: [amy@amyhonnorspeechpathology.com](mailto:amy@amyhonnorspeechpathology.com)

Anna Phasey:  
Ph: 0432 254 572  
Email: [anna.phasey@icloud.com](mailto:anna.phasey@icloud.com)

# GROWING SUPPORT FOR SYP CHILDCARE

**Rhiannon KOCH**  
JOURNALIST

A RECENT survey, created by a group of passionate parents, highlights the need for more childcare options in southern Yorke Peninsula.

More than 170 families responded to the online survey, with some of the results surprising even organisers Nadia Slade, Katie Hughes, Amy Honner and Anna Phasey.

“The survey found a lot of people were relying on informal care options, like relatives and friends, with only 31 per cent able to access long day care, rural care or family day care,” Mrs Hughes said.

“About 18 per cent, or 45 families, had no access to any childcare option, formal or informal, which really surprised us the most.”

The group decided to collect the data and use it to advocate for accessible childcare options in the community.

“There are some families travelling almost an hour to drop their children off to care, driving back, working and then completing the two-hour round trip at the end of the day,” Mrs Hughes said.

“We had 60 families say they were able to access some level of care, but 102 families saying they needed the service.”

“The majority of people reported they were unable to obtain the amount of days/hours they would ideally like.”

The survey also highlighted a want and need for out of school hours care.

Results from the survey will now be sent out to key stakeholders like potential private providers, the state government and Yorke Peninsula Council in the hope it can generate some discussion and interest in estab-



“There are some families travelling almost an hour to drop their children off to care, driving back, working and then completing the two-hour round trip at the end of the day.”

— Katie Hughes

lishing more child care.

“Child care is a really complex issue, and we do appreciate the services we currently have, but there is a huge demand for more,” Mrs Honner said.

“About 146 respondents, 86 per cent of people, said access to child care would allow them to engage in paid work or increase their hours.

“People also said it would be beneficial to allow them to contribute to the family business, or even for something like self-care and travelling to medical appointments.

“With the current climate, people have been working and learning from home and there will be people looking to shift to regional areas.

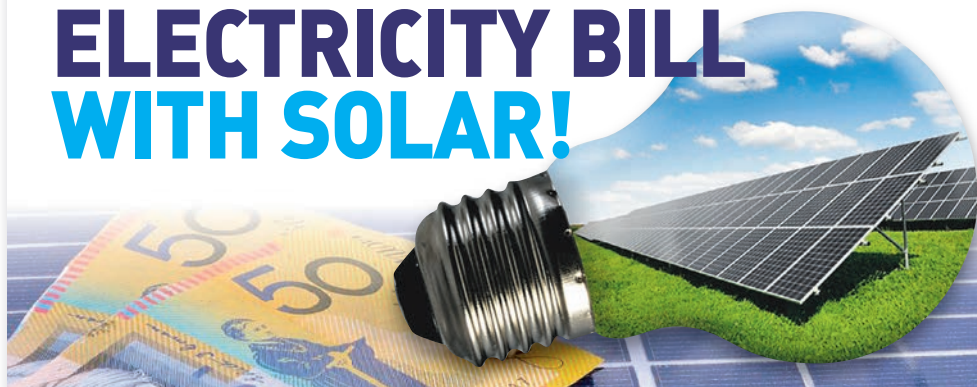
“This would be beneficial for our towns and communities.

“The provision of quality child care on the SYP is not only an investment in our children’s learning and development, but an investment in the future growth and prosperity of our region.”

To learn more about the survey, or to access the results, email [sypchildcare@hotmail.com](mailto:sypchildcare@hotmail.com).

■ **ADVOCATES...** Katie Hughes, Nadia Slade, Anna Phasey and Amy Honner are advocating for more childcare options in southern Yorke Peninsula.

## REDUCE YOUR ELECTRICITY BILL WITH SOLAR!



**Mildwaters ELECTRICAL**  
ELEC LIC NO: PD085507

**0408 835 479**

*Quality Work Guaranteed!*

## CONSULTATION NOW OPEN ON SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S DRAFT MINING REGULATIONS

**SUBMISSIONS CLOSE SEPTEMBER 11**

For more information  
[energymining.sa.gov.au](http://energymining.sa.gov.au)



Government of South Australia

# SYP childcare survey

Sonny COOMBS  
JOURNALIST

A GROUP advocating for childcare options on southern Yorke Peninsula is asking the community to complete a survey so specific data can be given to providers.

More than 170 families responded to an initial online survey, in September last year, which found Minlaton to be the preferred location for future child care.

Southern Yorke Peninsula Childcare Feasibility Group members Nadia Slade, Katie Hughes, Amy Honner and Anna Phasey now need more specific data to help progress any future development.

"There is limited long day care and family day care in the area at the moment, so a lot of people rely on extended family and friends which isn't ideal," Mrs Hughes said.

"The initial survey found some parents are putting their children on the longest bus route to get home just so they can get an extra 30 minutes at work.

"It found that 17 per cent of respondents, or 43 families, had absolutely no option for child care both formal or informal so they can't engage in work."

Mrs Hughes said childcare options would allow people to work, and help attract people to the area.

"We have received letters from businesses, schools, hospitals and other organisations that can't attract staff because there isn't any option for child care," she said.

"We have highly skilled people in the community who want to work but can't because there

**"We have highly skilled people in the community who want to work but can't because there aren't any options for childcare"**

— Katie Hughes, Southern Yorke Peninsula Childcare Feasibility Group



**CHILD CARE FEASIBILITY...** Member for Narungga Fraser Ellis chats with Anna Phasey, Katie Hughes and Nadia Slade about the need for child care in Minlaton. (Absent: Amy Honner.)

aren't any options for child care.

"The survey is not just for those who currently have children but also those who are thinking about having children in the next few years."

Member for Narungga Fraser Ellis said he was proud to work with the group to research the demand for child care.

"Once the data has been collected, I will be writing on the group's behalf to a number of childcare providers to encourage their interest in establishing their services in our area," he said.

"Services like these are so important to regional communities, because they encourage

people to live and work in regional towns.

"Full credit must go to the SYP Childcare Feasibility Group, who have been working tirelessly to find a solution for the community."

To complete the survey, visit [www.surveymonkey.com/r/MinlatonCCOSCH](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MinlatonCCOSCH).

From page 1

## Second hospital hit by doctor shortage

MINLATON'S accident and emergency department closures have been due to a local doctor taking much-needed leave, and inability to secure locums to cover.

However, a new doctor is due to arrive at Minlaton next month, according to management.

Both weekends the Minlaton A&E has been closed, emergencies have been redirected to Yorketown.

During the long weekend closure, 12 patients were diverted from Minlaton to Yorketown, which had 28 emergency presentations, up from 25 at the same time a year earlier.

YNLHN CEO Roger Kirchner said Adelaide Unicare was contracted to provide A&E services at Minlaton.

"Occasionally due to staffing shortages this service may be transferred to Yorketown or Maitland Hospital for a short period of time," he said.

"This arrangement has been in place for many years."

Mr Kirchner said the rural doctor shortage was one of the most significant challenges the state, and country, was facing.

"We continue to work closely with locum providers and local medical practices to ensure we can cover any unplanned leave and source doctors in line with the Enterprise Agreement," he said.

"As always, we thank our staff for always working hard to provide the best possible care and services for the community and our patients."

"A comprehensive Rural Medical Workforce Plan has been developed to ensure the ongoing ability to recruit rural GPs, which includes doubling rural medical intern positions, offering more training opportunities and identifying ways to grow, incentivise and strengthen our rural medical workforce."

"The Rural Generalist Program and the Rural Nursing and Midwifery Workforce Plan were launched earlier this year and play a key role in growing a sustainable future rural nursing and midwifery workforce and increasing rural generalists throughout the region."

"We are also continuing our efforts to recruit rural generalist practitioners at Wallaroo Hospital."

"These positions will play a key part in providing a salaried model of care, expanding medical positions within our health services and further strengthening our workforce to ensure we can continue to provide high level care to the community."



**HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT STARTING YOUR OWN BUSINESS?**

**DO YOU ALREADY OWN YOUR OWN BUSINESS?**

We offer personalised services to boost and support your homegrown business: tailored programs and workshops, ongoing mentoring, networking and comprehensive business assistance.



**Book a FREE in-person meeting with Dee Edwards, Entrepreneurship Facilitator:**

[nviflinders.com.au/envision-bymn-booking](http://nviflinders.com.au/envision-bymn-booking)



POWERED BY

**ENTVISION** Entrepreneurship Facilitators >>>>  
AN AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE

## Don't struggle with wet clothes hanging around this winter!

Call in and see our large range of dryers and specials in store

**SIMPSON LG BOSCH Electrolux FISHER & PAYKEL Haier SAMSUNG Miele ASKO**

**Kadina reTraVision**

38 Graves Street, Kadina  
Phone 8821 1322

**Best Service Guaranteed** **Great Range** **Best Brands**

hummm zipPay BUY NOW. Pay later Find us on Facebook



# Country Times

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2022

VOL. 54 NO. 8 | \$2.50 INC. GST

## Attention finally for Wallaroo roads

WALLAROO'S entrance road is finally set to receive some much-needed attention.

Pavement rehabilitation and resurfacing works on a section of the Copper Coast Highway between Bowman Road and Athena Drive are planned to begin this financial year.

The works will be the first stage of a joint project between Copper Coast Council and the Department for Infrastructure and Transport.

Planning and reconstruction works are also planned for several other arterial roads over the next two financial years.

Copper Coast Council has been lobbying the

state government to swap control of the road since about 2013.

In 2019, council proposed it take control of a 5.4 kilometre section of the Copper Coast Highway as well as part of the Spencer Highway, Victoria Street, May's Crossing, Hughes Street and Irwine Street.

In exchange, it would hand Bowman, Sharples and Magazine Roads to the government.

Council also asked for \$1.4 million — based on an independent assessment of the condition of the roads — but it was denied.

Last year, Member for Narungga Fraser Ellis

and council lodged a petition in parliament, calling for immediate attention to the road.

Council also floated a revised plan in which the state would take the heavy vehicle routes from council in exchange for sections of the Copper Coast Highway, Victoria Street, May's Crossing and Hughes Street.

Mayor Roslyn Talbot said she was pleased the government was prioritising the much-needed works.

"The Copper Coast Highway is one of the most utilised roads in our region," she said.

"The state government has heard our voices

and we are grateful DIT has come on board to make this project a reality.

"Great things can be achieved when the different tiers of government work together and this will be another example of a good outcome from a collaborative approach between state and local government.

"This road has not been of standard for quite a number of years and we thank Fraser, residents and visitors for their persistence in lobbying to help fix this road, giving the town of Wallaroo the beautiful and safe entrance it deserves."

» MORE PAGE 3



PHOTO: Nigel Parsons

**CHILDCARE BOOM...** Federal Minister for Emergency Management Bridget McKenzie, Member for Grey Rowan Ramsey and Liberal Senate candidate Kerryne Liddle visited Yorke Peninsula on Saturday to recognise successful applicants in the Black Summer Bushfire Recovery Grant program, announced last week. Pictured at the site of the proposed childcare centre in Minlaton are SYP Childcare Feasibility Group member Katie Hughes, YP Council mayor Darren Braund, YP Council's Tramy Ngo, SYP Childcare Feasibility Group member Anna Phasey, The Hon. Bridget McKenzie MP, SYP Childcare Feasibility Group member Amy Honner, The Hon. Rowan Ramsey MP, and Liberal Senate candidate Kerryne Liddle.

» MORE PAGES 3 & 4

**SEAFOOD ON SPENCER  
SOLD OUT**  
PAGE 13

**Farming Extra**  
PAGES 47-52

**ANTHEA GETS READY  
FOR SHAVE**  
PAGE 20

From page 1

# Construction begins on child care facility

LOCAL mum and small business operator Steph Parsons said running her hair salon 52a while working through care options for her daughters Riley (2 years old) and Tully (7 weeks) has been difficult.

"I'm quite excited to see it progress, because it's something local mums deserve," she said.

"There's young women in the community who have no help (looking after their children), which I can imagine is quite isolating.

"I've been lucky in that sense because my mum is happy to take the kids for a day or so, but even then, that's it.

"It's been pretty hard (to juggle everything), I'm the only hair salon in Minlaton so I could potentially be open full time, but it's just not possible at the moment."

Mrs Parsons said she expects the centre to be popular with people right across southern Yorke Peninsula.

"I think if you build something, they'll come," she said.

"I would think people would be jumping at the opportunity."

YPC mayor Darren Braund said works are scheduled to be completed by the end of this year, with the facility operational by the beginning of 2024.

"It was fantastic to be there to see fences up, speak to construction crews and to see the project get underway; it's very exciting," he said.

"It's needed now more than ever, not just with trying to get more people back into the

workforce by having a child care option, but also with the broader challenges currently seen with employment in regional areas.

"A big thank you for the tireless effort must go to Yorke Peninsula Council staff and the SYP Childcare Feasibility Group, to make sure this project got up and running."

A tender process for the operations of the facility has closed, with a process to be completed before a provider is selected.



FOR THE FUTURE... Jackson and Steph Parsons with their daughters Riley and Tully, who will make use of the new centre when it's completed.



FIRST STEPS... Romaldi Construction QSE manager Kym McKay and Yorke Peninsula Council mayor Darren Braund at the site of the Southern Yorke Peninsula Community Childcare Centre at Minlaton.



## LOOKING FOR SOMETHING TO KEEP YOU BUSY AND THAT IS FUN TO DO? A PERFECT GIFT IDEA!









Call in and see our large range, different models to suit all ages and interests – in store now

**UGEARS**  
is a unique combination of wood and mechanics



Kadina  
**reTraVision**

38 Graves Street **Kadina 8821 1322**

BEST SERVICE GUARANTEED
  GREAT RANGE
  BEST BRANDS





■ From page 1

# Two centres to be opened within a year

“This will only happen through success in building a staff team dedicated to our vision and, through our commitment to in-person vocational training with our affiliated RTO, ELC Training Australia, we are confident in achieving this.

“Anyone in the community with an interest in expanding their career in this space should get in touch with us.”

Works on the site at Minlaton, conducted by Romaldi Construction, have so far included laying concrete and installation of structural steel.

The proposed initial lease period for the operations at the site is two years, with four, 5-year rights of renewal periods, giving an overall desired 22 years.

YPC CEO Andrew Cameron said the creation of more enrolment opportunities should alleviate much stress for local parents who struggle with work and care commitments.

“We’re extremely pleased to announce that, after a long process, Jawbem Group was selected as the lessee for the SYP Community Childcare Centre as well as the Maitland Childcare facility,” he said.

“We do still need to go through a public consultation plan for the lease proposal regarding both facilities.

“However, if all goes smoothly, Maitland could be open and operational as both a centre and staff training facility sometime this May and the SYP Community Childcare Centre at Minlaton by next January, as previously forecast.”



FROM THE GROUND UP... The current state of the Southern Yorke Peninsula Childcare Centre construction work at Minlaton.

## Yorkes magazine

### Three weeks to go before the next edition

Our bi-annual lifestyle publication is due to hit the shelves in April.

Yorkes Magazine takes a deeper look at life on the peninsula, championing local characters, communities, and our way of life. The free magazine promises to engage and inform lifetime locals and prospective visitors.

More than 15,000 copies will be distributed in the 4th April edition of the YP Country Times, participating Yorke Peninsula cafes and businesses, information centres locally and in surrounding areas, and online.

Be sure to grab a copy.

#### Yorkes Magazine Advertising Partners

Yorkes Magazine values our local partners. We share the belief Yorke Peninsula is the best place to live, work and stay.



☎ 8821 1155 | ✉ info@yorkesmag.com.au | 🌐 ypct.com.au/yorkesmag

### YOUR GUIDE FOR PLACES TO



### Easter and school holidays are fast approaching!

Promote your business, club, organisation or event in our special guide dedicated to Eat, Shop & Play

**Commencing 4th April edition running for two, 2-week blocks**

**BLOCK 1:** 4th & 12th April; **BLOCK 2:** 18th & 26th April

Inspire locals and visitors with ideas for where to dine or shop, or places to visit for fabulous outings – so many great things to do with family and friends!

*Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to promote your business, club, organisation or event throughout April*



For more information or to book your advertising space, contact Cynthia, Sheila or Matt on **8821 1155** or email **sales@ypct.com.au**