

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-



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— Katie Hughes

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

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.

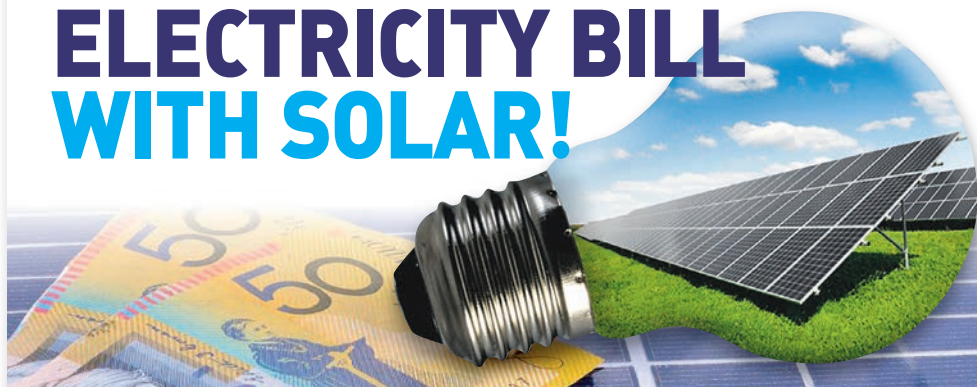
“With the current climate, people have been working and learning from home and there will be people looking to shift to regional areas.

“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.

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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.

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."



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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.



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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.

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