

MEDIA RELEASE

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Attention: News Editor

Dedicated duo drive Early Childhood Hub

Two dedicated mothers in Katanning recently saw a long-held ambition begin to take shape as the town's Early Childhood Hub gained major funding through the State Government's Royalties for Regions program.

The Early Childhood Hub was allocated \$5.725 million through the Growing Our South initiative, announced in February by Regional Development Minister Terry Redman.

Davina Davies and Tania Edwards started feasibility and business planning for the initiative in 2011, with support from the Great Southern Development Commission (GSDC) and Lotterywest.

Their efforts paid off in 2013 when the Shire of Katanning included the proposal in the SuperTown Katanning Multicultural and Aboriginal Engagement and Enhancement Project, eventually leading to the February funding announcement.

Mrs Davies said the aim of the Early Childhood Hub project was to construct a multipurpose building to house the range of early childhood services in Katanning.

"From the many case studies nationally and internationally, we identified that early childhood hubs were the best model for delivery of services," Mrs Davies said.

"They provide a one-stop shop for families, support easy referral between services, and facilitate integration of services.

"Some families who have been in Katanning long-term may be able to seek out the services available in town or know who to ask.

"However, other new families, perhaps from a humanitarian refugee background or a disadvantaged background, could face significant challenges in finding out what is available and how to access it."

Mrs Davies said the hub would provide an easily identifiable venue for all families to access services.

GSDC Chairperson Peter Rundle commended Mrs Davies and Mrs Edwards for their years of dedication.



Building partnerships for regional prosperity

Mr Rundle said he knew the pair had volunteered many hours of work to the project, and continued to do so even though their own children were now in school.

“Projects like the Early Childhood Hub take significant time and effort to plan and develop,” Mr Rundle said.

“It will enable early childhood services to accommodate future population growth, to share resources, make joint applications for funding, work closely in partnership to address local challenges and opportunities, attract new services to town and be the central point for early childhood development information and services.”

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