



BoysTown

May 14, 2008

Budget offers new hope for unemployed

BoysTown today welcomed the Rudd Government's \$3.7 billion employment services reform package to improve the lives of Australia's most disadvantaged.

The national youth agency has long recognised the need for employment programs that actually address the problem of social exclusion faced by marginalised young people.

BoysTown Chief Executive Officer Tracy Adams said the organisation's work in areas of significant disadvantage highlights the need for programs that provide work experience whilst addressing individuals' barriers to open employment.

"We are optimistic that the Government's budget initiatives will create more opportunities for young people who are doing it tough," Ms Adams said.

"Their recognition of the need for tailored case management shows an understanding of the very real personal and social barriers faced by many unemployed young people."

Ms Adams said the young people engaged in BoysTown programs in communities such as Blacktown, Campbelltown and Mt Druitt in western Sydney; Logan, Ipswich, Inala and Deception Bay in southeast Queensland; and Salisbury, Playford and Port Pirie in South Australia will benefit from a fresh approach.

"Young people need to be able to be an active part of their community and BoysTown's programs use 'Work as Therapy'," Ms Adams said.

BoysTown believes the best way to engage marginalised young people is through Interim Labour Market programs, which give young people on the job training, address their personal barriers to employment and provide support until they are able to move into the open employment market.

"When young people's individual needs are met and they are given the opportunity to contribute via work, we have seen remarkable changes, not only in individuals but in entire communities.

"Some of our programs have seen 74 per cent of participants, who have never had a job, break the intergenerational cycle and move into sustainable employment.

"In other areas we have seen youth recidivism reduced by 50 per cent."

BoysTown operates Job Networks and pre-employment programs in New South Wales, South Australia and Queensland.

"The funding provided in this budget is one more step towards giving all young Australians a fair go," Ms Adams said.

"We welcome the opportunity to work with the Federal Government to improve the lives of young Australians."

ENDS

Media Contact: Jessica Tatzenko – 07 38671248 or 0434 077 478
Kristy Porter – 07 38671386 or 0434 077 439