



## Media Release 29<sup>th</sup> March 2007

The number of childcare vacancies continues to gain political and public attention, with a battle of words between the political parties adding to the concerns of parents with young children, says Childcare Queensland President Gwynn Bridge.

Of course, that does not help parents who cannot find a place for their child, and we are asking those parents to the free child care access hotline: 1800 670 305 run by the Department of Families, Communities and Indigenous Affairs.

We know there are a couple of places where there is a shortage, but this will soon be rectified.

While we support the political attention on childcare facilities, it is important that parents are well informed. We have surveyed our members and found there are many vacancies across the state. In most towns and cities throughout Queensland there is a surplus of childcare vacancies. These may not necessarily be right next door to where you live or work, but the chances are there will be vacancies within a reasonable distance of your work or home.

The problem is that some parents are not even looking for child care in their own area because of the publicity surrounding vacancies.

Childcare Queensland's other concern is that sensational reports of childcare shortages has led to an upsurge of development applications still in council, and land with development approval being offered for sale, in areas where there is already an adequate or over-supply. This could mean the closure of highly respected childcare centres because of excess of availability.

Federal Minister for Families and Community Services Mal Brough yesterday also supported this view that the "horror story" of insufficient places is inaccurate following a nationwide, extensive review of childcare vacancy rates. In fact, Minister Brough is estimating that there 100,000 vacancies nationwide.

Even in Minister Brough's own electorate the oversupply has led to two childcare centres being closed.

Childcare Queensland is working with local Councils and having discussions with both State and Federal government representatives in an attempt to stem this unfettered growth.

**Contact for further details:**

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