

EARLY YEARS PARTNERSHIP

Statement by Minister for Early Childhood Education

MS S.E. WINTON (Wanneroo — Minister for Early Childhood Education) [12.18 pm]: I rise today to update the house on the Early Years Partnership, a unique 10-year partnership to give Western Australian children the best start in life. This collaboration between the state government, the Minderoo Foundation and the Telethon Kids Institute works differently with communities to improve the development, health and learning of children from conception to four years, to create lasting change. Last week it reached a major milestone with the release of the final two of four community plans.

Four communities that are part of this partnership are Armadale West; central great southern, comprising the Shires of Katanning, Kojonup, Gnowangerup and Broomehill-Tambellup; Derby, including the Mowanjum and Pandanus Park communities; and, of course, Bidyadanga Aboriginal Community. Each EYP community has developed a community plan, which identifies key priorities to improve children's wellbeing and school readiness within that community and includes local evidence-based solutions. Each plan was co-designed with community members, community leaders, local families and services with the support of the Department of Communities, the Department of Education, the Department of Health, the Minderoo Foundation and the Telethon Kids Institute.

We know that communities face their own unique challenges, and the community is best placed to identify what it needs. Last week, I had the great honour to travel to the Kimberley to launch both the *Wirriya dunyji ooba babanil ingun (Happy strong small children) Early years community plan* for children in Derby and the nearby communities of Mowanjum and Pandanus Park and the *Yija Tili (True Sparks) Early years community plan* for children in Bidyadanga. It was wonderful to be joined by the member for Kimberley, Jay Weatherill from the Minderoo Foundation and members of the local communities, including the Ngunga Group Women's Aboriginal Corporation, the Mowanjum community, the Pandanus Park community and Bidyadanga Aboriginal Corporation, La Grange Inc, as we celebrated this very important milestone.

The early years of a child's life are critical for positive life outcomes. During this time, children build the foundation for lifelong learning, health and wellbeing. Through the Early Years Partnership, we are committed to listening and working collaboratively with communities to create change for children. We are increasing awareness of the importance of early development, strengthening community collaboration and governance, providing better data and evidence to identify the main enablers and barriers to children thriving in their communities and mobilising resources to amplify or address those enablers and barriers.

The Cook government is proud of the Early Years Partnership and its new ways of working to achieve great results for children, families and the wider community.