

□

### Media Release

March 03 2011

#### **It's time to act for vulnerable children**

The Coalition for Children in Care today welcomed the Opposition's policy to commit to the handover of the provision of foster care to non-government organisations in line with Justice Wood's recommendations.

Justice Wood's 2008 Inquiry into Child Protection found there would be a higher level of care and support of foster children if they were supervised by accredited non-government agencies.

"Transfer of out of home care to the non-government sector is long overdue and the Coalition for Children in Care (CCC) welcomes the Liberals and Nationals commitment to start the handover process immediately. This will enable Community Services to focus on its core business of identifying and protection children at risk of significant harm and improve the outcomes for children in care," Maree Walk, General Manager of The Benevolent Society said.

It is disappointing that the current government has delayed implementing key recommendations of the Wood Inquiry into Child Protection for two years. It's time to act for vulnerable children. Reducing the number of children in foster care will only work if there is a strong commitment to early intervention for vulnerable families so children are not put at unnecessary risk.

"Children who need to be removed from their families for their safety should always receive the care and protection they need, including being placed in care.

"In order to reduce the number of children who come into the out of home care system, we welcome the Opposition's commitment to intensive services for families who need to make

change to keep their children safe and the focus on early intervention in the Opposition's announcement. "

Regardless of the outcome on March 26, both sides of politics need to move swiftly to implement the recommendations of Justice Wood's 2008 enquiry without further delay.

Media enquiries and to arrange an interview with Maree Walk, from The Benevolent Society spokesperson from the Coalition for Children in Care: Liz Lawrence 0410 003 934.

-Ends-

### **About the Coalition for Children in Care**

CCC is an alliance of 30 non-government foster care and residential care providers, formed

\* in response to the NSW Government's emphasis on cost of care, rather than quality of care, and

\* to ensure that Justice Wood's recommendations on out-of-home care are implemented.

The members of the Coalition for Children in Care are

Association of Child Welfare Agencies (ACWA)

Allambi Youth Services

ANGLICARE, Diocese of Sydney

Anglicare, Canberra and Goulburn

Baptist Community Services

Barnardos

The Benevolent Society

Boys Town, Engadine

CASPA

Care South

CatholicCare, Hunter/Manning

CatholicCare, Sydney

CatholicCare, Wollongong

Centacare , Broken Bay

Central West Family Support Group Inc

Hunter Aboriginal Children's Service

Kari Aboriginal Resources Inc

Life Without Barriers

Mackillop Family Services

Marist Youth Care

Pathfinders Inc

St Joseph's Cowper Inc

Samaritan Foundation

Southern Youth and Family Services

Stretch-A-Family Inc

The Burdekin Assoc

Uniting Care, Burnside

Wesley Mission

Youth Off the Streets

Youth Care, UPA

Currently NGOs provide 36% of foster care, 91% of residential care and work with 85% of the support to high needs children.