

Better skills for better care

Child care services and families across Townsville have been receiving support in promoting and maintaining high quality care for children for over 20 years thanks to the North Queensland Inclusion Support Agency (NQISA).

NQISA is an initiative of the Inclusion and Professional Support Agency, funded by the Australian Government and sponsored by Townsville City Council.

The program maintains high quality child care in eligible childcare services by increasing the skill level of carers and service staff in line with nationally consistent principles.

The agency's target group includes children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, refugee families, Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Australian South Sea Islander children and children with ongoing high support needs, including those with a disability.

Director of the Thuringowa Central World of Learning, Brooke Standfield, has seen firsthand the way NQISA changes the lives of children and their families.

Caileb Matthews, two, is a child with a visual impairment in Brooke's centre. Ms Standfield said Caileb has made huge advances in his development thanks to the support he has received since February.

"The North Queensland Inclusion Support Agency has provided weekly visits to Caileb and our staff," Ms Standfield said.

"They have loaned us resources and supplied staff with guidance to help us better understand Caileb's situation and what we can do to assist his development.

"We've also been referred to other support services in the local community.

"In less than ten months Caileb has gone from a child who was unable to even walk to a happy toddler who can't be stopped."



NQISA currently supports 145 childcare services. Australian Government approved childcare services are eligible for support including: community based and private long day child care services, outside school hours care, including vacation care, family day care and occasional care across Townsville and the surrounding regions. Contact NQISA on 4727 9683.

National Youth Week competition

Townsville youth are being encouraged to put on their thinking caps and come up with an innovative and inspirational event for young people, in a competition that will see the winning idea staged for the region's young people.

Townsville City Council and the Townsville Youth Council, along with the winning team, will transform the successful idea into a Townsville-based National Youth Week activity.

National Youth Week is a celebration for all young people between the ages of 12-25.

Activities are held across Australia during National Youth Week letting young people the opportunity to show off their talents, discuss youth related topics, learn new skills and participate in youth focused activities.

The competition will allow Townsville's youth to provide all the ideas and council will provide

the funds and the know-how for the winning entries.

Entries may focus on sport, music, theatre, craft, the environment, education, helping others, raising awareness... the sky's the limit.

The only restrictions are that the event must be drug and alcohol free, conform to health and safety regulations and be held in a location easily accessible by young people.

For anyone wanting help with their application, 'brain strain - idea generating' activities will be held throughout the December/January school holidays at CityLibraries.

So put on those thinking caps, brain storm with your mates and get planning.

It's as easy as 1, 2, 3:

- 1 Think about what activities you would like to see happen in Townsville during National Youth week.
- 2 Organise a group of friends 12-25

years of age to work with you on your idea or attend one of our 'brain strain - idea generating' activities during the December/January holidays.

- 3 Pick up or download, complete and return the 'Create your Youth Week' application form to Townsville City Council by 20 January 2009.

People aged 12-25 years are eligible to enter and must be available to attend planning meetings from the end of January through to the end of March 2009 as well as the event, which will be held between March 28 and April 5, 2009.

Townsville City Council will provide financial and staff resources to support and mentor successful applicants in the process of events management to turn their idea into reality. For further information please refer to council's website at www.townsville.qld.gov.au or contact the Youth Development Team on 4727 9000.

City's roads gear up for coming wet season

Townsville City Council is swinging into action ahead of the wet season with a huge roadworks program designed to protect the city's roads during heavy downpours.

Infrastructure Committee chair, Cr Brian Hewett, said this year's \$71 million roads program includes an extensive program of asphalt overlaying, insitu stabilisation and reconstruction in the coming months.

"Roads are a valuable asset to the community and we have a strong commitment to preventive maintenance to ensure they can withstand the pressure of heavy rain," Cr Hewett said.

"These works provide for longevity of our assets, and while in the short-term they may produce delays for motorists, in the long-term they provide safer roads for our community."

As part of the \$8.28 million preventative maintenance program, crews have completed asphalt overlays in Collins Street, Quinn Street, Wills Street and Hicks Street.

Under the \$4.45 million road reconstruction budget, crews have also carried out insitu stabilisation on Francis Street, Mallee Street, Banyan Court, Inglis Smith Street, Larkspur Crescent, Masuda Street and McDonald Street.

Cr Hewett said insitu stabilisation involves digging up the surface of a road and mixing it with cement and water before re-laying it.

"This work strengthens the surface of the road, making it more resistant to potential water damage," Cr Hewett said.

"This technique has been used successfully on our roads for some time."

Other major road projects underway or completed include preparatory work for the \$1.7 million Victoria Street Bridge replacement, a \$96,000 footpath reconstruction at the Bohlevalle State School and more than 6km of kerb and channel replacement before the new year.

Cr Hewett asked motorists to take extra care in areas where roadworks were taking place.

"We always endeavour to advise residents before roadworks begin in their area, however we ask people to be patient while we continue these important road upgrades."

Preparing Mallee St in Condon for the oncoming wet season.

