



## MEDIA RELEASE

Monday, 16 October 2017

### **New HIPPY providers announced for Warwick and West Ipswich**

Today, we announce HIPPY, the Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters will have new providers for the program in Warwick and West Ipswich. Congratulations to Mercy Community Services and Mission Australia as they join a network of local providers delivering to over 4,500 families per year in 100 communities.

The West Ipswich site, which has been operating since 2011 will be run by Mission Australia from 1 January 2018.

The Warwick site, which has been operating since 2014 and has a focus on supporting the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, will be run by Mercy Community Services.

The Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY) is a two-year, home-based early learning and parenting program that empowers parents to be their child's first teacher and assists the child to be school ready. The program addresses the long-term social consequences of disadvantage and supports the increased workforce participation of parents.

HIPPY has a focus achieving outcomes for children, and families on the program, supporting local training and employment and building strong communities. Since establishment in Warwick and West Ipswich HIPPY has employed approximately 20 local staff across both communities.

HIPPY Australia National Manager Marian Pettit said, "HIPPY assists children to be more confident and competent at school, which lay the foundations for greater achievement in life. Our HIPPY organisations are part of a network that understands their community and is committed to improvement. We aim to get families learning together."

HIPPY has been subject to rigorous independent research evaluation, which has shown that children who took part in HIPPY generally begin the program with numeracy and literacy skills well behind the Australian average. After two years, they had caught up, and their cognitive skills equalled those of other children. HIPPY achieves outcomes for families with over 80% of parents being more confident as their child's first teacher and 87% of children being school ready after 2 years in HIPPY.

The Brotherhood started HIPPY in Australia in 1998 and is responsible for supporting the community organisations that operate it across the nation. The Brotherhood of St Laurence holds the licence to operate HIPPY in Australia. The Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters is funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services.

Transition of the program to the new providers will commence shortly in each community, with existing Age 4 families transferring to the new provider from 2018 and a new Age 4 cohort commencing in 2018.

For more information about HIPPY, see the website at <http://www.hippyaustralia.org.au>

**For more information about HIPPY in Warwick and West Ipswich contact HIPPY Australia on 03 9445 2400.**