



Government of **Western Australia**
Pilbara Development Commission



MEDIA RELEASE

The Pilbara Development Commission is delighted to announce four new family day care providers for the region as a result of its Kids Matter Family Day Care Program. Two new licensed services have been established in South Hedland and there are a further two new carers operating in Paraburdoo.

In South Hedland, Sandra Antheu and Kerrie Stewart are the latest new carers to come through the Kids Matter Program. Kerrie moved to the Pilbara from New South Wales where she has had eight years experience in Family Day Care. Kerrie has a Diploma in Children's Services and is very willing to share her experience with other carers in the region. Sandra, who is originally from Mauritius, has experience caring and nurturing children as a teacher's aid in pre schools. Sandra has two children of her own, one a new baby of seven months.

"The Kids Matter Program has been a resounding success and the catalyst for the establishment of at least 17 new family day care services in the region since its inception in 2006" the CEO of the Commission, Mr Steve Webster said. Mr Webster acknowledged the resources sector for its generous sponsorship of incentives for new family day care providers. BHP Billiton Iron Ore, the major Program sponsor for Hedland and Newman has provided cash incentives of \$1,500 to all successful family day care licensees. BHP has also committed to building family day care compliant houses in their new housing stock in both Hedland and Newman to make the process of setting up a family day care even easier and more enticing for interested people.

Mr Webster also acknowledged the valuable support of other stakeholders including the four Pilbara local government authorities, the Department for Communities and the Pilbara Family Day Care Scheme, all of whom have contributed to the success of the program.

In particular, the Commission has worked closely with the Pilbara Family Day Care Scheme to ensure that all new providers receive appropriate ongoing support and assistance. Coordinator of the Scheme, Maureen Allert, said that, as a result of the Program, the Pilbara now has many interesting opportunities for children to benefit from a diverse range of family day carers from across the globe.



“Carers come with various skills and abilities that can enhance children’s development” Ms Allert said. “For example, we have some with teaching qualifications, others that are multilingual and a number that have experience working with special needs children” she said. The Commission is currently evaluating Kids Matter and will seek further sponsorship to continue the success of the program throughout the region.

For further information regarding the new services in South Hedland, please contact Maureen at the Pilbara Family Day Care Scheme on 0419 043 687. Information on the Kids Matter Program is available from Kathryn Moelands at the Commission on 9173 8407.

(ENDS)



Kerrie Stewart with Children in her care

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