

**Media Release**  
**For Immediate Release**  
**Wednesday 28 July 2010**

## **Time to invest in child protection programs that work**

UnitingCare Burnside calls on the Federal Government and the Opposition to suspend plans to extend welfare quarantining to more families and communities across Australia.

UnitingCare Burnside CEO, Jane Woodruff, said, "In an election campaign that's focussed on fiscal responsibility, plans to extend income quarantining to all long-term unemployed people do not make good economic sense."

"At a time when resources are limited, it is critical to direct funds to effective programs that target families where children are known to be at risk because of financial problems", Ms Woodruff said.

**Data from the ABS June Labour Force Survey suggests that extending welfare quarantining to all long-term unemployed will cost around half a billion dollars.**

Research on UnitingCare Burnside's Newpin program shows that targeted investment in those families most in need leads to sustainable change. This is a more cost-effective way to improve outcomes for parents and children and leads to significant savings for Government.

### **Newpin Father's Centre, Bidwill**

Newpin is an intensive long-term program that helps vulnerable families with children aged 0-5 years at risk of abuse and neglect, to improve their lives and keep children safe.

Between April 2009 and April 2010, eight of the fathers attending the Newpin Centre at Bidwill had a total of nine children returned to their care. The annual cost of providing the Newpin program to these fathers and their children was \$84,000.

**The savings to out-of-home care expenditure from the family restoration outcomes was \$327,000 in a single year.**

UnitingCare Burnside joins UnitingCare Australia in calling on both parties to shift away from a narrow focus on income quarantining to a broader conversation on the best policies and programs to keep children and their families safe, well and together. These policies should target increasing resources and support to families where poor financial management is impacting on children.

**END**

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