



MEDIA RELEASE

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Regional Funding Key to Better Outcomes

Mallee Family Care is calling on government to acknowledge the critical work being achieved by regional organisations by increasing funding for place-based programs and services. Chief Executive Officer, Ms. Teresa Jayet, says the success of its new evidence-based preventative SafeCare program, an in-home parenting program for families with young children, demonstrates the benefit locally based organisations bring to the communities they serve.

SafeCare is an extensively evaluated program developed by the National 'SafeCare' Training and Research Centre (NSTRC) at Georgia State University School of Public Health (U.S.A) and Ms. Jayet says Mallee Family Care adopted the program in response to its proven effectiveness in reducing the need for children to be placed in Out of Home Care.

"The Mallee experiences higher rates of vulnerability and this has a significant impact on our children. As an Agency, we are focused on early intervention and prevention programs that address the complexities and diverse needs of our community; providing support before problems become entrenched, meaning children can remain safely in the family home, without the need for formal interventions.

"We've been embedded in this community for 43 years. We understand the needs, challenges and opportunities that exist here and respond to them by implementing evidenced-based programs and services that are underpinned by our local understanding and established relationships."

During 2020, Mallee Family Care Child and Family Services staff completed the training for the SafeCare program and a staggered implementation began in February 2021.

"We're already seeing positive impacts from this program. Parents are learning how to create a safe and nurturing home, how to access services when they need them and to support the development of their children."

Young mother, Rebecca*, recently completed the program and she says she now feels capable of being the parent her young son needs.

"I'm using the skills I learnt every day and it really does help me. I know what I am good at now and I think I've grown a lot by doing SafeCare. I'm grateful for the support I was given to improve how I look after and interact with my son."

Ms. Jayet says Rebecca's story demonstrates the benefits of the program and highlights the importance of governments funding regional organisations to be adaptive and innovative in their service delivery.

"This program is a valuable addition to the services available through Mallee Family Care and we are calling on all levels of government to further invest in organisations with a proven and historical footprint in regional communities because this is fundamental to achieving better outcomes."

*Name changed for privacy reasons

ENDS



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