



RACHEL NOLAN MP

Member for Ipswich

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Thursday 28 October 2004

Queensland Adoption registers closing soon

Member for Ipswich Rachel Nolan today issued a reminder to local families that there is only a week remaining to lodge an adoption application before Queensland's adoption registers close on 8th of November.

Ms Nolan said that couples wishing to create their families through adoption needed to apply for an assessment through the Department of Child Safety for both local adoptions and intercountry adoptions.

"The Department of Child Safety is currently accepting applications from couples wishing to be assessed as prospective adoptive parents and depending on the number of applications received may not need to reopen the registers for some time.

"I would encourage those couples currently finalising their applications to submit the paperwork to the department before the 5pm deadline on Monday 8th of November," Ms Nolan said.

Ms Nolan said that adoption registers were reopened on 12th of September 2004 for the first time since the passage of the *Adoption of Children Amendment Act 2002* which closed the old adoption lists and allowed for all applicants already on the register to be assessed before new names could be added.

"Since the adoption registers were reopened the Department of Child Safety has received 238 Expressions of Interest, the majority of applications (187) being under the Intercountry Adoption Program with another 51 under the local adoption program.

"The Department of Child Safety has distributed almost 2000 information kits about adoption since the beginning of September and hosted almost 1000 people at information sessions conducted at various locations around the State.

"The information kits have also been available on the Department of Child Safety website throughout this period."

Ms Nolan said that the decision to call for Expressions of Interest at this time was to ensure the Department of Child Safety had sufficient applications to process on a rolling basis to meet the needs of children requiring adoptive families in Queensland.

"As people would expect, the process of adopting a child does not happen overnight," Ms Nolan said.

"The entire intercountry adoption process may take 6 months at the very least and in many cases it can actually be up to two years or more before a child is matched with adoptive parents.

"Because timeframes vary between individual couples and relinquishing countries it is important that the department is continually conducting assessments on a rolling basis so that we are always ready to send files to relinquishing countries when they advise us there are children needing families in Queensland.

“The number of Australian children requiring adoptive placements has reduced over the years to a very small number, meaning more couples wishing to create their families through adoption are looking overseas than in the past.

“It is impossible to estimate how many children born in Queensland will require adoptive placements in future years and therefore, it is impossible to give a realistic indication of how long couples seeking to adopt a child from Queensland may have to wait to become parents.”

Ms Nolan said additional resources had been directed to the adoption units within the Department of Child Safety to ensure there was the capacity to deal with the incoming applications and to carry out assessments in line with the placement needs of children requiring adoption.