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Bligh Government's \$10M boost to child protection in Ipswich

The Bligh Government has committed more than \$10 million over the next three years to provide safe places to live for abused and neglected children and young people in the Ipswich area.

State Member for Ipswich Rachel Nolan said Child Safety Minister Phil Reeves had confirmed Churches of Christ Queensland Pathways would receive more than \$2.77 million, Lifeline Community Care more than \$4.2 million and Mercy Family Services more than \$3.1 million over the next three years.

Ms Nolan said Churches of Christ Pathways was being funded to recruit, train and support foster carers to provide safe and loving homes for more than 180 children and young people.

Mercy Family Services will recruit, train and support specialist foster carers to provide homes for four young people, while Lifeline Community Care and Mercy Family Services will run three group homes to provide around the clock care and supervision for up to 11 older children and young people at a time.

Ms Nolan said of all of the children and young people being cared for by Mercy and Lifeline would have complex to extreme needs, ranging from medical issues to challenging behaviours, including violence.

"Children and young people in care have often suffered severe abuse or neglect," Ms Nolan said.

"This can leave them with emotional scars and behavioural issues that they need to work through.

"The support and care they receive from foster carers, youth workers and other professionals in care help these young people begin to rebuild their lives, and possibly even return home to their own families if it's safe.

Mr Reeves said it was a sad fact that as at 31 December 2008, there were about 480 children and young people in the Ipswich area who could not live safely at home because at least one or both of their parents have abused or neglected them.

"However, thanks to our community partners such as Churches of Christ Pathways, Lifeline Community Care and Mercy Family Services, children and young people who have been abused or neglected are receiving the support they need, have a safe place to stay and a much brighter future.

"Protecting our children is an enormous responsibility. That's why we are investing a record \$638 million investment in child protection in 2009-10."

"Despite the global financial crisis, the Bligh Government is committed to maintaining our essential child protection services."

Mr Reeves said the funds for Churches of Christ Pathways, Lifeline Community Care and Mercy Family Services will help create and sustain 34.05 full-time-equivalent jobs.

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