



YWCA
CANBERRA

MEDIA RELEASE

YWCA CANBERRA RECOGNISED DURING ACT CHILDREN'S WEEK

28 October 2015: Today YWCA Canberra received an ACT Children's Week Award for spearheading the Child Aware Local Initiative in South Tuggeranong.

Children's Week Awards acknowledge individuals and organisations that have made a difference for children and young people. The Child Aware Local Initiative focusses on early intervention and connecting children and their families to community services with the overall objective of keeping children safe and well.

YWCA Canberra Executive Director, Frances Crimmins said that the strength of the project has been bringing together existing community and government services to prevent children falling through the cracks.

"This initiative has been appropriately called 'networking, but with results for children and their families'.

It has also been a fantastic example of the community sector and government agencies working together to ensure that communities are safe and connected – one of the underpinning principles of our work," Ms Crimmins said.

As lead agency of this innovative initiative, YWCA Canberra has led CALI with no direct funding in collaboration with the Tuggeranong Child & Family Centre, The Smith Family, PCYC and local schools.

The initiative helps vulnerable and socially isolated children and their families to form stronger connections to early childhood education and care, school, health and other support services.

In less than 12 months of operation, CALI has achieved remarkable outcomes, including:

- The establishment of the *Early Links to Learning* playgroup, which incorporates support for parents to read to their children and establish positive relationships with local primary schools

- A successful trial of co-locating a support worker at local primary schools to link families with The Smith Family's *Learning for Life* program which provides emotional, practical and financial support
- Providing practical support to families to enrol their children in early childhood education and care services, for example by simplifying communication materials.

CALI was part of the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009 – 2020, Australia's first national plan to address child abuse and neglect, and was supported by Families Australia and the Australian Centre for Child Protection.

- ENDS -

Frances Crimmins is available for interview.

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About YWCA Canberra: YWCA Canberra is a feminist, not-for-profit community organisation that has been providing community services and representing women's issues in the Canberra community since its establishment in 1929. YWCA Canberra employs more than 300 staff across the ACT, and delivers 30 quality programs in children's services, community development, housing, youth services, women's leadership, advocacy, and training. Represented in 122 countries, the YWCA has a global reach of 25 million women and girls. As part of this international movement, YWCA Canberra works for a world where reconciliation, justice, peace, health, human dignity, freedom and care for the environment are promoted and sustained through women's leadership. For more information visit:

www.ywca-canberra.org.au

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