



For immediate release

Wednesday, 7 September 2011

YouthCARE responds to Minister's announcement, changes to National Schools Chaplaincy Program (NSCP)

YouthCARE CEO Stanley Jeyaraj says School Education Minister Peter Garrett's announcement on the National Schools Chaplaincy Program (NSCP) earlier today, brings certainty to staff and schools about the future of the program.

"Today's announcement sets the framework for the new funding cycle. Although it differs in some respect from the original commitments made by the Prime Minister in 2010, the Minister's statement reflects many of the recommendations we made to improve the program. We note the tightening of certain mechanisms arising from the recent Commonwealth Ombudsman's Report," Mr Jeyaraj said.

"YouthCARE is pleased to see an increase in the maximum grants for schools in remote areas from \$20,000 to \$24,000 and the determination of the Government to give priority for new funding to schools in regional, remote and disadvantaged areas. However, we would have welcomed these increases across the board given the fact that funding towards two-days a week of in school chaplaincy service has remained the same since 2007."

Mr Jeyaraj said the extra funding would allow YouthCARE – the largest provider of school chaplaincy services in WA - to extend its successful in-school chaplaincy and support chaplaincy services programs even further.

"We presently have In-school chaplains in 310 schools. A further 198 schools (which previously did not have access to our chaplaincy services) have access to school chaplaincy through our support chaplaincy program, run in collaboration with the Department of Education." The support chaplaincy initiative was formally rolled out in the metro and regional areas this year.

Mr Jeyaraj said YouthCARE's positive working relationship with DEEWR & the WA Department of Education, as well its reception in WA school communities confirm that its work is valued and supported.

"YouthCARE has been offering school chaplaincy in WA for 29 years. We enjoy wide community support and work in close collaboration with the Department of Education, schools and the community at large," Mr Jeyaraj concluded.

ENDS

Issued by:

Karen Coetzee, Communications Officer, YouthCARE, P O Box 482, Morley WA 6943
Tel.: (08) 93765032 email: karenc@youthcare.org.au