

**Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace
Relations**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2011–2012**

Outcome 4 - Employment & Participation Policy

DEEWR Question No.EW0216_12

Senator Nash provided in writing.

Question

Getting Teenage Parents Back In The Work Force

"The budget indicates it has \$47.3 million over four years to get teenage parents back into the workforce. The budget No 2 paper, pg 137, states it will target teenage parents in 10 targeted Local Govt Areas. • How long will this plan go for? • Where are these LGAs? • How many are in rural and regional areas? • How many teenage parents will it involve? • Will the program be expanded? • What childcare support is there as there is no detail of this • Given the govt's capped and stopped the indexation of the childcare rebate, and the shortage of childcare places, how will the govt overcome these issues?"

Answer

The Compulsory Participation Plans and Support for Teenage Parents measure ("the trial") commences on 1 January 2012 and finishes on 30 June 2015. The measure will run for three and a half years.

The 10 Local Government Areas in which the trial will be run are Logan (QLD), Greater Shepparton (VIC), Kwinana (WA), Playford (SA), Burnie (TAS), Shellharbour (NSW), Rockhampton (QLD), Hume (VIC), Bankstown (NSW) and Wyong (NSW). Three of these locations (Burnie, Greater Shepparton and Rockhampton) are defined as regional areas according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, based on the 2006 Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA) classification.

Around 4000 teenage parents will participate in the trial.

The Government will consider the results of the trial prior to considering any expansion of the measure.

Parents in the trial, if they choose to use child care, will have access to Child Care Benefit and Child Care Tax Rebate, as well as the Jobs Education and Training Child Care Fee Assistance (JETCCFA) program and the Communities for Children programs. No parent in the trial will be forced to use child care. However, where they wish to access child care while they are studying or training, almost 100 per cent of their child care costs will be covered through the JETCCFA program. As part of the Compulsory Participation Requirements for Jobless Families Budget measure, from 1 July 2012, JETCCFA will be extended from up to 26 weeks to up to 52 weeks for parents in the 10 locations who are engaged in employment activities. JETCCFA is already available for up to 24 months for approved study activities. This means most

parents will pay no more than 10 cents per hour for child care while they are doing approved activities, such as study, training or paid work.

There are a number of approved child care services with places available in each of the 10 trial locations.

Under this measure, \$4 million is also being provided for the Communities for Children program to help eligible parents in these locations connect to early childhood services and prepare their children for school. This program currently operates in 49 sites around Australia and, as part of the trial, three new sites will commence from 1 January 2012 in Bankstown, Greater Shepparton and Rockhampton. This means that all 10 locations will be supported by Communities for Children services. The Communities for Children program is managed by the Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.