

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

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

Outcome 4 - Employment

DEEWR Question No. EW0778_12

Senator Bernardi asked on 19 October 2011, Hansard page 100

Question

**Family Centred Employment Project (FCEP) - Average cost per family
excluding start-up cost**

Senator BERNARDI: So there is a considerable start-up cost. My question then is, if you remove that, what is the average cost per family to facilitate them into this? You might not be able to provide me with that now. Ms Paul: We will probably have to take that on notice Dr Morehead: We will take that on notice. ... Senator BERNARDI: I am trying to exclude the hefty upfront cost of getting office space and staff and things of that nature. I just want to know what it costs to service a family in this program. Ms Paul: We will take that on notice. We will have to separate it. Senator BERNARDI: If you do not mind, that would be good. Ms Paul: Of course, these are absolutely the most disadvantaged families; so, compared with the cost of income support for, say, five years prior to one of them actually cracking a job under this scheme, I am told it is quite a cause for celebration. Senator BERNARDI: Ms Paul, I am just interested in the number.

Answer

The Family Centred Employment Project (FCEP) was announced in the 2009 Budget with the aim to engage service providers in three priority regions to develop and test innovative service delivery arrangements with disadvantaged families. The design, implementation and delivery of services have been flexible and adaptive to the needs of families, with an objective to develop best practice strategies to assist jobless families.

Funding for the FCEP is not based on a cost per client or cost per family model, but rather an allocation of funding to providers to deliver the program using new and innovative service delivery models which assist those most disadvantaged in the community.

Across the three FCEP sites, to 31 August 2011, FCEP providers have engaged 133 families. Of these, 122 jobless families, comprising 540 family members, are actively working with FCEP providers. This includes:

- 114 children aged 0-5 years
- 226 children aged 6-16, and
- 200 adults.

While funding is not based on a per client model, the following cases detail the extent of FCEP engagement and the 'strengths based' and 'wrap around' approach which empowers FCEP families to develop strategies to sustain employment and manage their environmental circumstances, after the expiry date of the project. The cases also indicate how costs vary on a case-by-case basis.

Example 1: Single Mother – Education and Employment Outcomes

A single mother with six children, who had been unemployed since 1995, joined the Goodna FCEP in May 2011. As a result of discussions with her FCEP Case Manager and her JSA provider, she successfully completed a Certificate III in Aged Care and has ongoing stable employment at an Aged Care facility.

To enable the mother to undertake study, the Goodna FCEP team assisted her to gain access to a range of services and funds, including:

- suitable childcare and payment of fees
- Jobs, Education and Training Care Fee Assistance (JET) funding so that she could afford the associated costs of childcare
- use of brokerage funds to provide payment for six-month car registration and purchase of new car tyres, so that she could travel to and from the training program and transport her children to the different schools they attend
- financial advice to assist with the management of her outstanding debts
- removal costs
- purchase of work clothing.

Approximate brokerage provided: \$1800.

Example 2: Single Mother – Employment Outcome

A single mother with one child and subjected to domestic violence initially engaged with the FCEP Goodna in September 2010. The mother attended a group interview for a position in a local cafe and was successful in securing a position which is ongoing. She has been identified as having management potential and has attended inhouse training at the business' head office.

The Early Childhood Expert Officer sourced and enrolled the child in quality childcare, with care being provided in the hours to align with the mother's work shifts. The FCEP continues to provide support to the family by providing brokerage for driving lessons, assistance with JET funding and liaising with Centrelink and the childcare centre. The family is being assisted by FCEP in securing appropriate accommodation in the Goodna area, so she is closer to work and the childcare centre.

Approximate brokerage expended to date: \$2000.