



Office of the  
**Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women**  
**Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence**

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Our reference: COM 03271-2018

14 JUN 2018  
Mr Neil Laurie  
Clerk of Parliament  
Parliament House  
George Street  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

1 William Street Brisbane 4000  
Locked Bag 3405  
Brisbane Queensland 4001 Australia  
Telephone +61 7 3719 7330  
Email  
childsafety@ministerial.qld.gov.au

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to the e-Petition (2911-18) sponsored by Ms Fiona Simpson MP, Member for Maroochydore, concerning the Maroochydore Neighbourhood Centre's funding of its Family Support Program, including access to the Local Area Priority Projects (LEAPP) initiative.

The Queensland Government is committed to further developing and enhancing the family support service system on the Sunshine Coast to ensure vulnerable families are assisted to strengthen their parenting skills and resilience.

In 2017-18, the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women provided approximately \$3.5 million in funding for the provision of family support services on the Sunshine Coast. This is inclusive of ongoing funding for family support services delivered through the Maroochydore Neighbourhood Centre.

I am pleased to advise that funding for the Targeted Family Support Service at the Neighbourhood Centre has not been cut. The department recently confirmed funding of \$103,252 per year for this program through to 2023. This funding supports operational and staffing costs.

In addition, in 2017-18 the department provided approximately \$60,000 in non-recurrent funding for a homework club, children's activities and parenting support through Connect2Families or, as it is also known, the LEAPP program. Connect2Families has provided non-recurrent funding to trial innovative and collaborative community-based programs. The programs were intended to develop existing community and service system capacity to better meet the needs of vulnerable families.

Participating organisations, such as the Neighbourhood Centre, have been aware that the Connect2Families funding was available on a non-recurrent basis only, and that the funding agreement will reach completion on 30 June 2018. The department has been working with the Neighbourhood Centre to identify potential partnerships that will enable the Centre to continue some of the programs it has trialled using the Connect2Families funding. I understand that the Neighbourhood Centre is now actively working with a range of community agencies to ensure families with ongoing needs are linked with appropriate service providers to ensure their individual needs are met.

The department has also made provisions for any clients currently accessing Connect2Families-funded Centre programs, who will be unable to continue doing so, to be transitioned to other existing programs in their community. Departmental staff will continue to work closely with all family support agencies in the area to ensure that seamless referral pathways exist between services to enable clients to access the right service at the right time.

Information gathered from the Connect2Families program has been used to inform place-based, sustainable and effective models of service delivery within the region when recurrent funding has been available. This has led to new and innovative family support models being established in the Nambour, Caloundra and hinterland communities of the Sunshine Coast. In 2018-19, the department will recurrently invest the funding previously used for the Connect2Families program to better target the needs of families in the Sunshine Coast area. A process inclusive of demographic data analysis and consultation with stakeholders, including local service planning networks such as the Regional Child and Family Committee, Local Level Alliance, and local service providers such as the Maroochydore Neighbourhood Centre, will be utilised to determine the best models and locations for services.

I hope this information is of assistance to the petitioners and that they are reassured that departmental officers are committed to continue working collaboratively with the sector. If you require any further information or assistance in relation to this matter, please contact Ms Noela Quadrio, Chief of Staff in my office, on 3719 7330.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Di Farmer', with a large, stylized initial 'D'.

**Di Farmer MP**  
**Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and**  
**Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence**