



6 September 2008

Media Release

Celebrating Foster Carers: A day dedicated to our Victorian Carers

The Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare (The Centre) and the Foster care Association of Victoria (FCAV) has dedicated a day to celebrate our Foster Carers and Kinship Carers in Victoria.

The 6th of September will mark the day of celebration which is also the start of the National Child Protection Week. Families from all over Victoria will convene at a Melbourne venue for a day of fun and entertainment. There is an expected 500 participants to the function.

The day will include entertainment, lunch and appreciation certificates to all the foster carers. "This Celebration Day we will be welcoming all new carers who have entered the Foster Care system in the last year and we will be showing our appreciation for their dedication to our kids" said Jo McMahon, CEO of the FCAV. "It is not an easy decision to make and we want to show them that they will be supported in their new role as Foster carers".

The Centre and the FCAV have conducted a similar Celebration Day in 2006 which was a big success and attracted nearly 500 participants. "What I look forward to the most is meeting other carers", says John Woolcock, foster carer, "it's the only time in the year where we can get together and swap stories and advice and know that all of us are in this for the same reason...our kids".

"These Foster Carers are the crux of our society" said Coleen Clare, CEO of The Centre, Melbourne. "They are giving these kids a second chance at life and they are giving them futures that they would otherwise not have.

Victoria is currently experiencing a shortage of carers in the system who are able to provide safe and supportive environments to children who are unable to live at home.

"We have wonderful carers on board but we still need more carers in order to provide these children with safe havens" said Coleen Clare, CEO of The Centre.

The Centre runs a 24 hour hotline service **1800 013 088** for the public who are interested in Foster Care or gaining information about Foster Care. People can also visit www.cwav.asn.au for information.

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