

Media Release

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FORUM AIMS TO REDUCE CHILDREN'S INJURIES IN TASMANIA

A forum and workshop in Hobart next week will discuss strategies to reduce childhood injuries in Tasmania.

Presenters at the forum to be held on Monday 15 March at the Glenorchy Civic Centre include the Tasmanian Commissioner for Children Paul Mason and Tasmanian Early Years Foundation Chair Dr Sue Jenkins. Other speakers include Chris Oriell (Headway), Deborah Byrne (Brain Injury Association), Lyn Chapman (North-West Childcare Unit) and Vicki Russell (Drug Education Network).

The discussion will be facilitated by Michael Bishop, currently Manager Occupational Therapy at the Royal Hobart Hospital, who was instrumental in founding the renowned Child Injury Prevention Project (ChIPP) in Mackay, Queensland.

An earlier forum was held in Launceston in February.

The forums are being presented by the Childhood Injury Prevention Coalition (ChIPC), a group of diverse stakeholders who recently joined together to work to reduce the rate of and impact of preventable and unintentional injuries to children under 14 years of age.

Membership of the group includes Kidsafe Tasmania, Tasmanian Early Years Foundation, The Commissioner for Children's Office, Delta Dog Safe, Tasmanian Fire Service, the Departments of Health and Human Services, Education, Infrastructure Energy and Resources, local government bodies, the Coroner's Office, the Royal Lifesaving Society, Nursing Board of Tasmania, General Practice South, Pharmaceutical Society of Tasmania, the Tasmanian Ambulance Service and the Royal Hobart Hospital.

Tasmanian Early Years Foundation (TEYF) Chair, Dr Sue Jenkins said injury was the leading cause of death to children under 14 years of age, and it is also a major reason for admission to hospital.

"This forum brings together ChIPC members and other interested stakeholders from across Tasmania to determine priorities for the next 12 months and will set the future direction of the coalition in reducing the rate and impact of children's injuries," Dr Jenkins said.

The forums are being funded by a grant from TEYF and are a direct response to the 2009 'Outcomes in the Early Years' that showed that in some areas of Tasmania, hospitalisation due to injury or poisoning was significantly above the State average. Dr Jenkins said TEYF had recommended the development of collaboration and joint planning across government and non-government agencies to improve outcomes for young children.

"The Childhood Injury Prevention Coalition is a perfect conduit for this task and the forums are a positive and valuable first step in this effort. The Launceston forum had already prompted a number of initiatives and these would be built on at the Hobart event.

"TEYF is pleased to be support the coalition in holding the forums to raise awareness of this important issue and seek support from a range of stakeholders to improve the outcomes for Tasmanian children," Dr Jenkins said.



The Hobart forum runs from 9.00 am to 4 pm on Monday March 15 at the Glenorchy Civic Centre, Cooper Street, Glenorchy and entry is free of charge.

Ends....

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