



Linda Savage MLC

Linda Savage, State Labor Member for East Metropolitan Region
Labor Spokesperson for Early Childhood Years

JUNE 2011 | Phone: (08) 9477 3855 | Email: linda.savage@mp.wa.gov.au

The Health and Happiness of our Children



Mum Katie McElwee and daughter Rhiannon, with Opposition Leader, Eric Ripper, Shadow Spokesperson for Child Protection Sue Ellery, and Shadow Spokesperson for The Early Years, Linda Savage

On Monday 29 November 2010, at Munchkins Pre Kindy in Ellenbrook, the Opposition leader Eric Ripper launched the Labor discussion paper – “The Health and Happiness of our Children – a new approach for the Early Years”.

The discussion paper, written by Ms Savage, aims to raise awareness of the need to implement a new approach for the early years. Experts agree a more integrated approach to early childhood can only improve the health and welfare of our children. Western Australia has an opportunity to be a national leader in early childhood services and now is the time for the community to join in the debate.

There are increasing numbers of children starting preschool with poor verbal and social skills, and there are increasing rates of obesity, aggression and mental illness in children.

Experts all agree the earlier the intervention to prevent and address problems, the better the outcomes. It is also the only economically responsible way forward.

Every dollar invested in infancy and early childhood produces savings many times over. Using the benefits of the “boom”, now is the time to deliver the services most suited to children and their needs in the 21st century.

State Budget sidelines our youngest Western Australians

The Barnett Government has dashed hopes it would allocate desperately needed funding in the State budget for child health nurses.

Labor Spokesperson for Early Childhood Years Linda Savage said a 2010 Auditor General’s report on universal child health checks found many children were missing out on some of the seven key health checks between birth and school entry, and the number of child health nurses had not kept up with population growth.

“In February this year Premier Colin Barnett labelled early intervention to ensure children start school healthy and ready to learn as ‘not just as option, it is a moral imperative’,” she said.

“Once again Mr Barnett has failed to back this up with action by failing to allocate any new funding for additional child health nurses in the State budget.

“More than 100 additional child health nurses are needed just to keep up with current demand

and the Barnett Government’s failure means infants and toddlers are the big losers in this year’s budget.”

Ms Savage said the seven key checks played a critical role in ensuring children received a healthy start in life.

“Physical, emotional and cognitive development occurs at the greatest rate during the early years and failure to provide these checks has a life-long impact,” she said.

“The economic impact is reflected in increased demands for health and educational services and funding is needed to cope with increasing rates of mental illness, obesity and anti-social behaviour in a child’s later years.

“The Barnett Government has failed Western Australia’s youngest and most vulnerable citizens by failing to ensure there are adequate numbers of child health nurses to provide the key health checks infants and toddlers need.”

Building our future - keeping jobs local

Western Australia currently has more than \$170 billion worth of resource projects – either in the planning or construction phase. Yet most of the work for these projects is going off-shore.

East Metropolitan MLC Linda Savage said it was ‘not right’ that WA was missing out on local manufacturing jobs at a time when the State’s economy was supposed to be ‘booming’. “Some local companies have had no choice but to lay off workers and apprentices,” Ms Savage said.

“The skills shortage in WA is getting worse as workshops lose apprentices and have no incentive to train new ones because there is no work.

“The WA youth unemployment rate is now 21.7 per cent – compared to 8.5 per cent three years ago.”

Ms Savage said the Government was not doing enough to keep jobs on-shore. The State Opposition has introduced legislation – the Skilled Local Jobs Bills – which will help local companies compete with overseas firms to win contracts on major resource projects.

Please show your support to keeping skilled jobs in WA by signing our petition. Contact Linda’s office on 9477 3855 to sign.

International Women’s Day 8th March 2011

Women’s income is very much part of the struggle that led Clara Zetkin to table the motion that led to International Women’s Day (IWD). She proposed that every year, in every country there should be a celebration on the same day to press for the demands of women. The result was that the following year in 1911, IWD was marked for the first time.

Income remains one of the most important markers of where women fit into society including in Australia. Until 1969 employers in Australia were entitled to pay women less than their male colleagues even though they were performing the same work. It was not until 1969 that the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission adopted the principle of equal pay for identical work – which meant women performing the same tasks as men under the same award, had to be paid the same award rate.

In 1972 the commission expanded the principle to require equal pay for work of equal value, meaning women who performed the same tasks (but under different awards) had to be paid the same.

Despite these milestones women’s incomes remain significantly lower than for men. Western Australia has the sorry distinction of having the greatest gender pay gap in the country being 25%.

At the heart of the gender pay gap is the failure to truly value and recognise the traditional work of women in the home. The result is that by extension paid work that involves so called “female skills”, those associated with caring, those involving children, the ill, the aged are generally less well paid.

This is not a new issue, it is reflected for example in the fact that it is only just over 2 months ago that Australia’s first government funded paid parental leave scheme came into effect. This is an important step forward for us all.



THE Waddell REPORT

Andrew Waddell MLA, State Member for Forrestfield
Labor Spokesperson for IT Strategy

JUNE 2011 | www.andrewwaddell.com.au | Phone: (08) 9454 6415 | Email: forrestfield@mp.wa.gov.au

Threat of profits before services



Not willing to match the Federal Labor Government’s \$180 million to construct and run a truly Public Hospital the Barnett Government has announced two shortlisted companies, private hospital operators Ramsay Health Care Ltd, and St John of God Care Inc.

Health is a core service that the government is responsible for. The State Government shouldn’t shirk that responsibility.

Ramsay Health Care Ltd is currently the provider for the Joondalup Health Campus, which

continues to perform well below the national average for many emergency services, this is despite their net profit RISE of 39% in 2009/10, with a net profit of \$148.3 million.

These companies intend on making a profit out of our hospital, and that money will not go into better medical services for our community.

We need essential services in the hands of an accountable government, this cannot happen when profits to share holders are the main priority.

State Government owes our kids some airconditioning

Last year you may remember I believe that is this a blatant disadvantage to children in our community, simply because a P&C doesn’t have the same level of donations as other more affluent school communities.

Since then little has changed in Education Minister Liz Constable’s attitudes toward Edney Primary School. Despite her backflip to allow P&C funded air-conditioning to be installed in schools, she is still refusing to allow Edney to use their Building the Education Revolution (BER) funds on air-conditioning.

I am disappointed that the Minister fails to recognise that not every school has the capacity to raise the amount of money needed for air-conditioning.

I believe that is this a blatant disadvantage to children in our community, simply because a P&C doesn’t have the same level of donations as other more affluent school communities.

The State Government owes Edney Primary School air-conditioning. The BER could have been their only opportunity to have it installed in these new buildings, and that opportunity continues to be denied to them.

I will continue to lobby the Government to change its position and to bring forward the long awaited review of the outrageous school air-cooling policy.

Enough is Enough on Bill Hikes

The continued stress of bill hikes in the State is causing extreme hardship for many in our community.

This financial year the Barnett Government has taken a record number of residents to court because they couldn’t afford to pay their water bills. Clearly people are not coping with the 30% rise in water bills in the past two years.

We need to stand up and say enough is enough on utility price hikes. A government who raises the prices so dramatically then takes legal action against those who can’t afford to pay has lost its way badly.

If you are experiencing financial difficulties there is assistance available through the HUGS scheme which provides financial assistance to help people pay their water, gas and electricity bill.

For more information about financial assistance schemes please contact my office on (08) 9454 6415.

CONTACT ME

If you have any comments, ideas or feedback, please let Andrew Waddell know by contacting:

Telephone: 9454 6415
Fax: 6313 0610
Email: forrestfield@mp.wa.gov.au

OFFICE ADDRESS
High Wycombe Village Shopping Centre 530 Kalamunda Road, High Wycombe

POSTAL ADDRESS
PO Box 2269, High Wycombe WA 6057



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www.twitter.com/waddell

JUNE 2011 | www.andrewwaddell.com.au | Phone: (08) 9454 6415 | Email: forrestfield@mp.wa.gov.au

Forrestfield Community Garden



BY ROB GEAR, TEACHER, FORRESTFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

After twelve weeks of heat and searing easterly winds the Forrestfield Community Garden is still looking great. Students and community members have done a wonderful job watering plants and making sure that everything has survived over summer.

Students have removed plants that have gone to seed and replanted fresh seedlings in preparation for autumn and winter. We have produced bumper crops of cucumbers, zucchinis, capsicums, eggplants, tomatoes, lettuce as well as masses of fresh herbs.

The garden has so much produce at the moment we will be giving it to classes to eat during their "Crunch and Sip" time each morning. Classes have already cooked some delicious zucchini muffins accompanied by an awesome salad using produce from the garden.

Local butchers Williams Meats have agreed to purchase fresh herbs from our garden. This is a wonderful real life, enterprising venture. Students can see where the herbs come from and where they end up. They can also decide how the money should be used.

We have many plans for 2011. These include;

- Chook shed to be built within the next few weeks.
- Chickens in all classrooms looked after by students and then housed in our chook shed.
- Wood fired pizza oven.
- Frog pond with solar water fountain.

- Passionfruit vines and nut trees to plant.
 - Paving through grassed area.
 - Sensory garden established.
 - An aquaponics unit trout and hydroponics - \$10 000.
 - Indigenous artist in residence – murals and other garden art works.
 - Scarecrows in the garden.
 - Garden sculptures – garden seating.
- These are just some of the exciting plans for our garden in 2011. Obviously we need to raise money to accomplish our vision. We have estimated that we need to raise in excess of \$20 000 to complete our garden.

We have transformed an old basketball court into a highly productive garden. It has taken a lot of energy, effort and money to transform something lifeless into something overflowing with abundant life.

With the help and support of local businesses, the community and the government this project will continue to grow and impact positively on the lives of the students and community members of Forrestfield, ultimately making their community and the world a better place.

If you can help by donating materials or money please contact Rob Gear at Forrestfield Primary School on (08) 9453 627



Corymbia Festival

Thank you to all those who came up and introduced themselves to me at the Corymbia Festival. Once again there were loads of great stalls, musical performances, free entertainment and games for children. I was happy to see our windmills were so popular – I managed to give out over 800 over the course of the day.

Lets Simplify Government

People expect their governments to solve problems, come up with solutions and to make appropriate changes to how our society runs. That becomes much of the focus of parliamentary life, coming up with new and better schemes to fix the system. Consequently every year, Government gets larger, spends more and pushes more complex regulation and complexity onto the community. Parliament exists therefore it regulates. It is quite adept at building complex systems and organisations to solve problems.

What parliament is not good at is getting rid of the complexity it has build when that system or organisation is no longer needed. In fact you can guarantee that at the end of any one year, there will be more legislation in force, even more regulations and more bodies to administer it. Occasionally a board or committee is disbanded, but when was the last time you heard of a complete Government Department being shut down (without being merged into another)? Why is that? Do we never achieve the changes we built these organisations for? When was the last time an Act was repealed because it didn't work, wasn't necessary anymore or we simply decided we didn't need to regulate in that area anymore?

The more complex Government becomes, the more expensive it is to run and the more bureaucratic it is for ordinary citizens and businesses to navigate. This needs to change, we should be demanding efficiency, and ongoing review of unnecessary legislation and government instrumentalities.

During the recent state budget process it became apparent that it costs over \$6000 per application made to the WA Industrial Relations Commission. This is an organisation that has met its use by date simply due to the fact that changes in Industrial Law now have the majority of applications made to the Federal Tribunals. A simple merging of the remaining functions of the WAIRC into another existing body like the State Administrative Tribunal could save the state MILLIONS of dollars a year. That is money that could go into schools, public housing or hospital beds.

This is just one example, I'd be fascinated to hear from you about other examples of inefficiency, unneeded services or organisations or unnecessary legislation. We need to dismantle that which we don't need anymore, we need to deregulate that which there is no point in regulating anymore. We should start paying attention to not only what Governments start doing, but also what they stop doing.

SENIORS REBATES

Cost of living rebate

THE cost-of-living rebate for Seniors Card holders has increased – to \$150 per year for singles and \$225 per year for couples. New applicants have until 31 July 2011 to apply; card holders who received a payment in 2009 or 2010 do not need to do anything, unless their bank account details have changed.

If you would like an application form, ring Andrew's office on 9454 6415.

Fire safety rebates

WA Seniors Card holders can now apply for up to \$200 rebate for eligible electrical and fire safety items. Eligible items include residual current devices (RCDs), mains wired smoke alarms, fire extinguishers and fire blankets. This current rebate is in addition to the home security rebate of \$200 which is still available to WA Seniors Card holders. The deadline for both rebate claims is 30 June 2012. All claims must be lodged prior to 31 March 2012.

To find our more ring Andrew's office on 9454 6415.

Bershire Rd & Roe Highway Intersection nightmare

There is increasing concern within our community about the intersection at Berkshire Road and Roe Highway in Forrestfield.

The RAC recently identified the results of its Risky Roads survey which identified Berkshire Rd and Roe Hwy intersection as one of the top ten most dangerous intersections in WA.

I am extremely disappointed in the Barnett Government for failing to fund an intersection upgrade in the recent State Budget. This comes despite the fact Barnett admitted on ABC Radio that the Eastern Suburbs have been neglected for too long.

I believe that this is a matter of urgency and will be advocating for it to become an election commitment in the next State Election.

FORRESTFIELD TOY LIBRARY

Provide fun and educational toys, puzzles and games for children up to 8 years old. Members may borrow up to 5 toys for up to 2 weeks.

ADDRESS: Corner Strelitzia Ave & Salix Way
Forrestfield
OPENING HOURS: Saturdays 9:30am - 11:00am

Congratulations Forrestfield United



Club Patron Andrew Waddell MLA, the Forrestfield United under-15s team and coaching staff.

Congratulations to the Forrestfield United Soccer Club's under-15 team's success earlier this year. The team won the Western Australian leg of the Manchester United Premier Cup, and represented Western Australia in the Pacific finals in Melbourne. The Forrestfield United Soccer Club has gone from strength to strength over the past few years, and I hope that through community support and the resources we can provide it with, it will continue to thrive.

Investing in IT education

In my role of Labor Shadow Spokesperson for IT Strategy I continue to search for new avenues to help promote IT services and education in our local community.

In this capacity I believe that we need to have a serious look into the way IT is taught in our schools, as it is imperative to the economic security and prospects of our State.

WA needs to move quickly to secure our place within the ever expanding global IT market, to help secure our economy after the mining boom.

One way we could begin to move towards a more diverse economy would be to set up IT Academies in our schools. We already have elite sports academies and programs, so why not IT programs, giving

students the opportunity to excel early in their education.

It is estimated that this year the video games industry has a market of \$US48 Billion, exceeding both the music and film industries. But we don't have to be confined to just video games, the possibilities are endless. We have very talented people in this state who are often forced to go elsewhere to fulfil their career ambitions.

IT is a strategic industry that potentially could be a major contributor to our economy in the future, but we need to act now. The first step is to encourage and nurture the talent we have here, an investment in training now is an investment in our collective future.

Dawson Park Primary School



Congratulations to Kai Soucek and Peter Aubrey of Dawson Park Primary School-Winners of my Bike Prize. Thank you to Mrs Sharon Clark for organising the Raffle. A total of \$637 was raised and will help fund the Rainbows and Boys Own programs run at the school.