

The Kingsford Smith Report

A COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER FROM PETER GARRETT – FEDERAL MEMBER FOR KINGSFORD SMITH ■ SUMMER 2011

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Welcome to 2011 – the year ahead

My first newsletter of 2011 features important information about Federal Government assistance for parents and carers showing what we are delivering.

Education Tax Refund

I was pleased to welcome students back to school last month, and to remind parents and families to check out if they are eligible for the Education Tax Refund.

Going back to class can be a pretty expensive time for families, with students often needing new uniforms, text books, or even stationery.

The Education Tax Refund helps to ease the burden, with parents able to claim the refund for eligible expenses when they complete their tax return.

To take full advantage of the refund, keep all education-related receipts, as proof of purchase may be needed.

The Education Tax Refund helps families that need it most, by refunding up to 50 per cent of the cost of eligible education expenses such as computers, educational software, text books and stationery.



In 2011, I look forward to visiting as many schools as possible and meeting students, teachers and parents

Eligible families can claim a 50 per cent refund, providing up to:

- \$390 for each primary school child (on total expenditure of \$780 per child), and

- \$779 for each secondary school child (on total expenditure of \$1,558 per child).

More information on the Education Tax Refund can be found at

www.educationtaxrefund.gov.au



Being active after school

Participating in sport is a great way for kids to stay healthy, gain confidence and have fun.

The Gillard Government's Active After-School Communities program funds schools and after-school care centres to provide free access to sport for disadvantaged kids. The government recently announced continued funding for 2011 including \$18,935 for Kingsford Smith services such as Malabar Public School (\$1,995) and Maroubra Bay Care Centre (\$1,680).

UPDATE on Malabar Headland

In a great win for our community, the north-western edge of Malabar Headland (known as Lot 4), will be formally transferred to the NSW Government for conservation purposes by 28 February 2011.

Malabar Headland is a terrific community asset, rich in heritage, World War II artefacts and native vegetation including the endangered Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub.

The Gillard Government's approval of the transfer vindicates the decades of campaigning by community groups and other advocates around Malabar, and it has been a privilege to have personally supported and advanced the cause in my role as local Member.

This transfer is delivering on the commitment made by Prime Minister Julia Gillard and myself last August to hand over Malabar Headland for national park and public open space – a fantastic national asset for the people of south-eastern Sydney.

Building the Education Revolution

Late last year, I went to the official opening of **the new Language Centre at Matraville Sports High School**, built as part of the Australian Government's Building the Education Revolution (BER).



With the Indigenous dancers who performed at the opening of Matraville Sports High School Language Centre

The Language Centre will not only be used by Matraville High, but other schools in the community. In fact, when I visited the Centre it was already being used by a local primary school for weekly Japanese lessons.

It has been fantastic to see the principal, staff, parents and tradespeople working together to deliver this great project.

And I look forward to attending the openings of more BER projects at Kingsford Smith schools in the coming year.

The BER program is part of the Australian Government's \$42 billion Nation Building plan to support jobs, stimulate local economies and invest in important infrastructure for the long term.

Australia-wide, there are around 24,000 Building the Education Revolution projects with approximately 120 projects in Kingsford Smith – a great legacy for our schools.

Paid Parental Leave begins

New Year's Day this year was historic because it was the start of Australia's first national paid parental leave scheme.

Working parents of children born or adopted on or after 1 January 2011 may be eligible for weekly payments of \$570 (before tax) for up to 18 weeks.

Eligibility requirements include:

- you must have worked at least 330 hours for 10 of the 13 months

before your new baby arrives,

- you may work full-time, part-time, casual, contract, seasonal or be self-employed,
- you can earn up to \$150,000 (individual income) a year and still be eligible, and
- you are an Australian resident.

More information:

www.familyassist.gov.au

Community consultation

Last November, Greens MP Adam Bandt presented a motion to the House of Representatives about same-sex marriage. This motion included a clause asking MPs to gauge community opinion. I am aware that there are differing and strong views on the issue of same-sex marriage. I would appreciate hearing the views of the people of Kingsford Smith. To have your say, email peter.garrett.mp@aph.gov.au

Thanks to our surf lifesavers

Sydney's beaches were extremely busy over the recent holiday period.

In the three weeks from Christmas Day, surf lifesavers at Coogee, Maroubra and South Maroubra performed 53 rescues and prevented 2083 people from getting in serious trouble, and treated thousands of people for bluebottle stings. Tragically, two people lost their lives recently at Maroubra Beach while swimming in rips at unpatrolled areas of the beach. The message is clear – swim between the flags. **Thanks to our surf lifesavers for their ongoing efforts on our beaches this summer.**

Assistance for families

Parents and carers may be eligible for payments or rebates for child care expenses from the Federal Government.

There are two possible payments for people whose children attend approved childcare facilities.

The Child Care Benefit is a means-tested payment of up to \$184 per child per week, depending on individual circumstances

The Child Care Rebate pays for 50 percent of your out-of-pocket child care expenses, up to an annual cap of \$7,500 (from July 2010).

Families may also be eligible for Family Tax Benefit Part A which is worked out on your family's combined annual income and your children's ages.

Family Tax Benefit Part B provides extra assistance to single parent families and families with one main income and is subject to an income test.

MORE INFORMATION

- www.familyassist.gov.au
- www.mychild.gov.au
- www.myschool.edu.au
- www.educationtaxrefund.gov.au