



Connections

child, youth and family services

MEDIA RELEASE / SECTOR UPDATE

Attention: COS, news, social affairs, youth, health & community

15 March 2010

BLACKBURN OFFICE FIRE

Connections UnitingCare is today dealing with the ramifications from a fire that has significantly affected the Blackburn Office at 48 Blackburn Road (corner of The Avenue), Blackburn.

The Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board (MFB) in a Media Alert at 2:28am (15 March 2010) stated that 'MFB crews from Box Hill & Nunawading were called to the building this morning. On arrival it was necessary to respond additional crews, due to intensity of the fire [sic].' The MFB Alert went on to state that, 'It took 60 mins to bring Under Control and the cause is Suspicious at this time.' The MFB reported 7 appliances and 20 fire fighters were in attendance.

'We are grateful that no one has been injured,' said Connections UnitingCare, Manager, Communications and Fundraising Matt Clear. 'Connections staff based at Blackburn have been re-located and we are aiming to have all services fully functioning within 24 hours,' said Mr Clear.

Connections is working to establish another site as a back-up for Blackburn services and staff, specifically Inner East Child FIRST (Family Information and Referral and Support Team) and The Parenting Assessment and Skills Development Service (PASDS).

The suite of Connections programs run from Blackburn will be fully operational with no interruption to service provision, including no affect to our Child FIRST capacity.

The Connections Blackburn office is across the road from The Avenue Uniting Church and was once The Avenue Neighbourhood House.

The Connections Blackburn site provides a variety of family and community strengthening services as part of the Connections range of innovative early intervention programs that support children, young people and families.

Specific services, including our Inner East Child FIRST (for families within the cities of Booroondara, Monash, Whitehorse and Manningham), is a key community intake and referral service and will operate from another site.

'We are lucky to have numerous other sites across the south eastern suburbs that will help us cover in a situation like this. Our staff will be working to ensure that everyone that had Blackburn as a base will be supported through one of our other sites and we will be contacting everyone that needs to know how they can make contact with us,' said Mr Clear.

» For updates and specifics related to Blackburn services in the coming days please [click here](#). Please note – we will update this page as soon as we have new information.

Media and More Information: Connections UnitingCare, Manager, Communications and Fundraising Matt Clear on 03 9271 0800 / 0403 229 094 / matt.clear@connections.org.au

Connections UnitingCare is a community organisation with a long and proud history of supporting marginalised and disadvantaged people. We offer a range of services across a continuum of care from preschool and childcare through to counselling and in-home support. We provide innovative and early intervention programs that support children, young people and their families giving them a better chance in life now and in the future.

More information at www.connections.org.au