

Labour's new child centres are gone but families continue to struggle for places ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

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EXCERPTS

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On the basis of an across Australia average, and without disaggregating into different age groups, for example into the high demand areas of care for babies and toddlers, the Rudd Labor Government has cancelled its commitment to 260 new childcare centres saying less than 40 new ones would do.

Meanwhile small towns like Stanhope in Northern Victoria only have access to formal child care two half days a week and the handful of places are constantly full. Women with young children who want to take up opportunities for paid work in this drought stressed community are too often unable to gain child care, or must drive long distances to find a centre with any vacancies.

Other regional towns like Mansfield cannot recruit unemployed nurses to their hospital in town, because these skilled workers cannot find child care. The Mansfield Shire had spent a lot of money on their submission for one of Mr Rudd's promised new child care facilities, but like other applicants their hopes to overcome the problem have now been dashed.

Working families throughout Australia will be very interested to know where Mr Rudd will now spend his saved \$390million that was originally committed to building the 260 childcare centres.

Or will this money simply disappear into some new bright idea from Mr Rudd, like the free insulation installation program that has now caused so much grief, or Deputy Prime Ministers Julia Gillard's new school halls for schools which actually want new classrooms or toilet blocks?

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Region: Australia and New Zealand ^[2]

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