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Hon Kim Hames MB BS JP  
MLA

## Goldfields playground a first for fun and therapy

Thursday, 2 October 2014

Speaking at the official launch of the Therapeutic Playground at the WA Country Health Service Child Development Centre in Kalgoorlie today, Health Minister Kim Hames said the concept was an important innovation in childcare assessment.

Dr Hames said the Therapeutic Playground, a first for the region, incorporated equipment specially designed for therapists to assess a child's gross and fine motor skills, balance, social skills, sensory development and language.

"It is the only place in Kalgoorlie where a specialist playground is available for child health assessments and therapy," he said.

"The playground will help local speech therapists, physiotherapists and occupational therapists to accurately assess how a child is doing against key developmental markers.

"The playground features a cubby house, sandpit, giant surfboard, swings and a mini merry-go-round, so children can relax and be themselves while their skills are properly assessed in a non-clinical, non-threatening environment.

"In the last four years we have established the Child Development Centre and employed an additional occupational therapist, physiotherapist and paediatric social worker, bringing the total number of therapists to six."

The Minister said additional appointments for the child development team utilising the Therapeutic Playground would commence from October 3, 2014.

Most children who use the Child Development Centre are aged up to five years, but therapists also see school-aged children.

Variety-the Children's Charity provided \$102,000 to upgrade the services and facilities, and to establish the Therapeutic Playground.

Playground equipment was previously installed in 2010 with funding from the BHP Billiton Sir Lindsay Clark Trust.

Fact File