



Bronwyn Bishop MP

Chairman

House of Representatives Standing Committee on
Family & Human Services

MEDIA RELEASE

Friday, 10 March 2006

Welfare agency to discuss barriers to work for disadvantaged families

UnitingCare Burnside, an agency of the Uniting Church, will appear before the House of Representatives Family Committee on Monday (13 March 2006) to give evidence to the current inquiry into balancing work and family.

The majority of Burnside's clients are from families that rely on Government benefits either in times of crisis or over a longer transition period. Recent welfare reform is aiming to encourage more of these families to participate in the paid work force.

The agency's submission to the inquiry says that many of their clients want to develop their skills and be more financially independent. However, disadvantaged families, particularly single parents, find it difficult in combining parenthood with paid work.

Child care, transport and clothing costs, together with high effective marginal tax rates, create disincentives to paid work.

Committee Chairman Bronwyn Bishop said "Not all parents of young children choose to work; however, it is not fair that those who wish to do so often end up deciding that it's not worth it".

"Those parents who wish to provide for their families and enjoy the positive outcomes of work need better support," Mrs Bishop said.

"Child care should not just be for the well-off, and it needs to be more accessible in regional and outer metropolitan areas."

Also appearing at the public hearing will be the Australian Family Association, the Women Lawyers Association of New South Wales and the Australian Association for Infant Mental Health. There will also be a mid-morning panel discussion with Sydney mothers who have told the committee about their own difficulties in combining work with child care in individual submissions to the inquiry.

Venue:	Room A, Level 8, Commonwealth Offices Charterbridge House, 70 Phillip St, Sydney
Time:	9.30am-3.00pm 13 March 2006
Participants:	9.30am-10.15am Australian Association for Infant Mental Health 10.15am-11.00am UnitingCare Burnside 11.15am-12.30pm Panel discussion 1.30pm-2.15pm Women Lawyers Association of NSW Inc. 2.15pm-3.00pm The Australian Family Association (NSW)

For media interview: please contact Damien Jones on **0409 147 247** at the electorate office of the Committee chairman Hon Mrs Bronwyn Bishop MP.

For further information: contact the Committee secretariat on (02) 6277 4566, mobile 0421 053 822 email fhs.reps@aph.gov.au or visit <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/fhs/workandfamily/>