

Ready to give kids great start

Women find support to gain qualifications

ALPINE Children's Services (ACS) has made an investment in the future of the Mount Beauty Kindergarten by helping two of its employees, Isabelle Raw and Georgie Fonay, become fully qualified four-year-old kindergarten teachers.

Both women have recently completed a Bachelor of Early Childhood Teaching through Charles Sturt University.

Ms Fonay said they were very grateful for the support they received from ACS during their years of study.

"They gave us a paid study day once a fortnight for two years, and helped us qualify for a scholarship that helped fund payment for our placement days," she said.

"They came through for us because they want fully quali-

fied educators working for the centre."

Ms Raw said one of the reasons the ACS was keen to have her and Ms Fonay qualified was that kindergartens in the Alpine Shire had difficulties finding relief staff.

"We have a permanent kinder teacher in Eloise Fountain, and now she will be able to go to professional development sessions without worrying about who will replace her," she said.

"Next year the National Quality Framework will be implemented, and all long daycare centres will have to have a bachelor level trained staff member.

"Early childhood education does not just start when the children go to kinder.

"The government is starting to recognise that educa-

tion occurs in long daycare centres from babyhood, and education programs are being run suited to the ages of the children using the service."

ACS manager Jenny Kromar was thrilled Ms Fonay and Ms Raw had completed their course of study.

"Lake View Children's Centre now has three early childhood teachers, including the kindergarten teacher," she said.

"This reflects Alpine Children's Services focus on improving staff qualifications in early childhood.

"We know that the first five years of a child's life shapes their future – their health, learning and social development – and we want to make sure that their future is bright."



INVESTMENT FOR THE FUTURE: Isabelle Raw (left) and Georgie Fonay, both newly qualified kinder teachers, help Ria Dwyer and Lachie Angelini on the slide.