



Mother-to-be Rebecca Cupitt, SCHS midwife Amy Lehmann, Zoe Support case manager Cindy Cavanagh-Knež and Mildura Council maternal and child health nurse Suzy Gulbin in the new allied health consulting room.

Picture: Carmel Zacccone

# Room helps mums' health

By Megan Frankel-Vaughan  
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A SUPPORT agency for Sunraysia's young mothers and mothers-to-be has expanded to include an allied health room to provide additional services for its clients.

Zoe Support, which operates from four different sites in former homes along Deakin Avenue, provides support for young women to return to education after having children.

Zoe Support executive director Anne Webster said the centres had provided birthing and lactation classes previously through Ramsay Healthcare and Maternal and Child Health, but had not had a dedicated health room on-site until now.

She said the outreach ante-natal services and consultations would be provided in collaboration with Sunraysia Community Health Services and Mildura Council Maternal and Child Health.

Ms Webster said many young mothers experienced isolation and discrimination in medical centres and public spaces and

therefore did not feel comfortable in using services as others did.

"Research shows young mothers continue to face stigmas," she said.

"Their right to parent and parent well is frowned upon.

"It's reducing the barriers young mothers experience in the community more so than others."

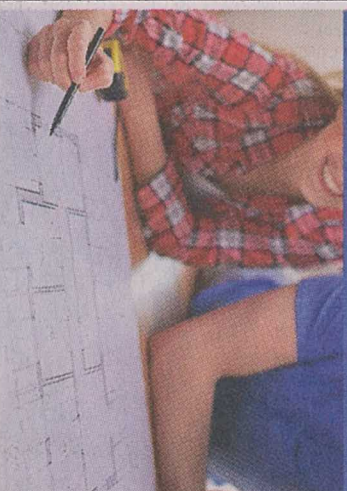
Sunraysia Community Health Services (SCHS) received funding to deliver the services through the State Government's Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies program, which chief executive Simone Head said involved working with women in their pre-parenthood phase and in antenatal care.

SCHS parenting support services coordinator Felicity Cummins and Ms Webster worked together to arrange the service for Zoe Support parents.

Ms Head said part of SCHS's role was understanding the people the organisation worked for and that some had barriers to accessing services.

"This promotes flexibility," she said. "It's great for young women."

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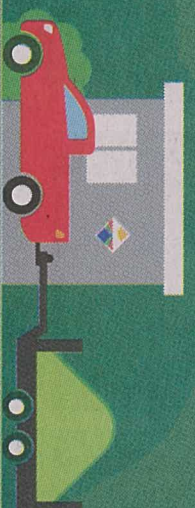


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