



# Wanted: boost in day care

**By Vaughan Mawbey**

FAMILY day carers are in demand to look after pre-school children.

The Hobsons Bay Council last week decided to launch a campaign to attract more family day-care providers, and investigate whether it is feasible to register care providers in suburbs adjoining Hobsons Bay.

Community services director Peter Hunt said family day care providers look after children in their own homes, charging a fee of about \$4 to \$6 an hour per child.

Most carers looked after two or three children, but they were allowed to take five.

"We have 60 carers registered, but we could probably double that number if carers were available," he said.

"It caters for parents who are working or studying."

Mr Hunt said previous Federal Government regulations provided that a council could recruit family day-care

providers only within its own municipal boundaries.

But the government changed the rules recently, allowing councils to recruit carers outside their boundaries.

This change could be useful, particularly in the fast-growing Point Cook area, where there is high demand for childcare, but some potential carers live across the municipal border in the Wyndham municipality.

"We know of some carers who looked after children and established relationships with families while they were residents of Hobsons Bay," he said.

"But they moved across the municipal boundary and thus were no longer eligible to provide care for the families whose children they looked after."

Mr Hunt said a report would be brought to the council on whether costs or risks would be incurred in recruiting family carers outside the borders of Hobsons Bay.