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South Australia launches \$20 million initiative to transform children's lives in Northern Adelaide

Glam Adelaide

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The South Australian Government, in collaboration with the Minderoo Foundation, has initiated a new venture titled the Children in the North Alliance, aimed at enhancing conditions for children in Northern Adelaide. This partnership, involving a \$20 million funding over ten years, equitably split between the state government and Minderoo, represents a significant commitment to regional development and wellbeing. It aims to promote lasting change through long term investment and support across a range of projects and initiatives.

The Alliance will focus on place-based approaches, where geographical communities partner with governments, business and other stakeholders to co-design innovative responses to improve the health, development, social and emotional wellbeing of their children.

The initial phase of this project is already active at Davoren Park through the Swallowcliffe Children's Precinct, which includes Swallowcliffe Primary School and related community facilities. Here, local leadership has taken tangible steps to foster child development, such as placing nurses from Lyell McEwin Hospital at the primary school, conducting health checks at the pre-school, and establishing a Kids Club offering free after-school and holiday activities.

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Helen Connolly, Commissioner for Children and Young People SA, shared her optimistic view of the project's impact. "The Swallowcliffe Children's Precinct is thrilled to be part of the programs and activities that will flow from this significant long-term investment in our children," Connolly remarked. She continued, "Through our joined-up efforts and commitment to doing "whatever it takes" we know that we can support children to experience life changing opportunities and environments and build a brighter future."

These initiatives focus on relationship-building and direct community engagement that the alliance advocates. Penny Dakin, Minderoo Foundation's Executive Director for Communities, spoke about the importance of addressing core issues through communal leadership. "To break cycles of adversity, we need to tackle issues at their root cause and the most effective way to do this is by empowering communities to lead the way," Dakin stated.

Premier Peter Malinauskas said, "We know that local communities and families know what they need, and when we empower them to decide and take practical action, we have the potential to see lasting change for the better."

John Hartman, CEO of Minderoo Foundation, explained the foundation's role in the partnership, focusing on enabling communities to spearhead innovations and overcome challenges. "Minderoo Foundation is proud to partner with the South Australian Government to support communities build a fair and thriving future for their children," Hartman noted, adding that this initiative places communities in a pivotal position, enabling them to work towards a just future where every child has opportunities to succeed.

Each program under this alliance will undergo thorough evaluation to identify the most effective measures, with the goal of replicating successful strategies across South Australia and potentially nationwide. This initiative stands as one of the only long-term contracts between government and a philanthropic body dedicated to children's

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outcomes in Australia, marking a considerable step in public-private partnerships aimed at societal benefit.