

Tuesday, 18 July 2006

CANADIAN CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT THINKER TO TAKE UP RESIDENCE

One of the world's leading experts on early childhood development will be South Australia's next Thinker in Residence.

"Dr Fraser Mustard, from Canada, has enormous expertise and standing in the field of early childhood development," Premier Mike Rann said.

"In 1998, he co-chaired an inquiry for the Government of Ontario that is considered a landmark study both for Canada and the rest of the world.

"Just last year, he established the world-leading Canadian Council for Early Childhood Development.

"Right across the world and here in South Australia, too there's a growing level of interest in those vital, initial years of a child's life and a greater appreciation that what we do or don't do for our children can have huge implications for later in their lives."

"We expect that Dr Mustard like so many previous Thinkers will ultimately improve the lives of South Australians.

"Specifically, we think he can help South Australia become a national and international leader in integrated early childhood development, provide us with strategic advice on the future of this field and help the State design, develop and deliver programs for the benefit of children and parents."

Premier Mike Rann made the announcement during tonight's Town Hall public lecture by the current Thinker in Residence, Climate Change expert Stephen Schneider.

Dr Mustard will come to Adelaide in October for the first of two four-week periods.

"The Thinkers program continues to be a great fillip for our State providing not just ideas but also practical proposals and solutions," Mr Rann said.

"The Thinkers in Residence program will continue to bring the best minds to Adelaide and to put those minds to work on the biggest public policy challenges facing our State.

"We have just farewelled another Thinker in Residence, the inspiring Rosanne Haggerty, known as the 'Mother Theresa of affordable housing'.

"I was especially pleased that she was able to secure the backing of eight of South Australia's leading business figures to work on the Common Ground project to combat homelessness."