



**TEAM WORK:** Just some of the faces involved in Bright's Early Years Centre (from left) Drew Carey, Seamus Boland, John Pryor, Jenny Kromar and Sonia Nannipieri met at the Deacon Avenue site to kick off proceedings for the \$2.7 million project.

# Building blocks for life learning

■ Work begins on Bright's new childcare centre

By ALEX BAIRD

WORK has begun on Bright's Early Years Learning Centre, a project that will create a vital hub for children in their formative years.

With construction beginning on the Deacon Avenue site this week, the centre is due to be opened next year.

When finished, the facility will cater for early childhood development with a kindergarten, playgroup, childcare service, toy library and amenities for maternal and child health nurses all available on the one site.

The \$2.7 million project has been jointly funded by the Federal Government, Department of Education and Early Childhood, Department of Planning and Community Development and Alpine Shire Council.

A multi-disciplinary team involving all stakeholders, Alpine Children's Services and Bright P-12 College are working together to support the project's development.

ACS manager Jenny Kromar said the Early Years Centre would

not only be a nucleus for young children, but also resolve capacity issues that have been a concern the town.

Lyndhurst Children's Centre is full, with up to 40 children attending daily, meaning some local families are on a waiting list to send their young ones to childcare.

The Bright and District Kindergarten in Elm Court can cater for 29 students at the one time, with a total of 62 children enrolled this year.

The new facility will allow for up to 106 places for children, also creating more job opportunities.

"It will allow for a much larger amount of children to access early childhood service compared what we currently have, it's more than a 50 per cent increase," Ms Kromar said.

"It's not just the bringing together of all the services, it's actually here to improve the number of places we can provide."

Alpine Shire mayor Peter Roper said he was "thrilled" with what centralising facilities will provide for the town's families.

"What we'll have is a great

Early Learning Centre for the Bright and district community," he said.

"This, combined with the services on offer at Bright P-12 College, will result in a complete 0 - 18 facility."

Bright P-12 College principal John Pryor said the merger of all of the services would be a huge benefit to Bright's young people.

"It's about bringing together all the early childhood facilities on to the one site, so it's an integrated service," Mr Pryor said.

A cluster of different community members has already met to work together in creating a healthy outside space for children at the site.

On January 25 interested parents, representatives from the school and ACS staff, attended the first Garden Group meeting for the outside space.

A vision for the space was developed and a wish list put together, which will marry up against the landscape architects plan.

"It's a really big focus for the facility," Ms Kromar said.