

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **2016 Federal Election: Will childcare policies provide immediate relief for families?**

Australian Childcare Alliance, the peak body for privately owned early childhood education and care services in Australia, has today released its Federal Election Policy Priorities, calling on all parties to commit to policies and immediate investment capable of delivering quality and affordable early childhood education and care for families across Australia.

“There are more than 1.2 million children using approved early childhood education and care in Australia, more than half of whom are in long day care” ACA Secretary Paul Mondo said today.

“As we have heard many political commentators state in recent months, childcare is the BBQ-stopper for Australian families, and the affordability crisis being experienced by a rapidly growing number of families is not something that candidates in this election can ignore” Mr Mondo said.

“The challenge for every political party running a candidate in the Federal election is to commit to policies and funding priorities that ensure the best possible outcomes for children whilst helping alleviate the impact on family budgets and ensuring services remain viable” Mr Mondo said.

“Make no mistake – this is not an easy task” Mr Mondo said. “These issues affect more than 800 000 families across the country, and that number is growing by the day”.

ACA represents more than 3000 early childhood education and care services across the country. ACA has called on all parties to commit to:

- An immediate increase in childcare assistance subsidies for families, including a 25% increase in Child Care Benefit and an increase in the Child Care Rebate annual cap to \$9000;
- Policy and funding arrangements to ensure no child is worse off in their capacity to access subsidised early childhood education every week;
- Coordinated, strategic planning for early childhood education and care; and
- An additional \$3.1 billion investment in the early childhood education and care sector.

“Ensuring children across Australia have access to quality and affordable early childhood education and care not only provides the best possible start for them in terms of school readiness and establishing a lifelong love of learning, but also stimulates the economy through increased workforce participation” Mr Mondo said.

“We stand ready to work with all parties to ensure that the Federal Government invests in our future through immediate, meaningful policy and budgetary solutions” Mr Mondo concluded.

## ENDS

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