

MEDIA RELEASE

Sunday 28th April 2019

ACA applauds ALP's policy to drive affordable early learning for families

The Australian Childcare Alliance (ACA), the peak body for early learning services, applauds today's \$4 billion announcement by the Australian Labor Party (ALP) to change the Child Care Subsidy framework to **improve the affordability of early learning services for many Australian families, particularly for those families on the lowest incomes.**

"We've been actively calling for a revision of the Child Care Subsidy parameters to bring all families back into the picture, and this is an enormous step forward." ACA President Paul Mondo said.

"Whilst this recent commitment does not resolve all of the issues associated with the activity test it would ensure that many Australian families would be better off as a result of the increase in subsidies, **particularly for vulnerable and disadvantaged families.**"

"We also welcome the review of the Additional Child Care Subsidy to ensure that those families who require the support of the Child Care Safety Net can access the available subsidies **as soon as possible via a simple process.** This is something we have been advocating for since the transition to the new system" Mr Mondo continued.

"ACA welcomes the ALP's acknowledgement that families **cannot be out of pocket** to fund an increase in educator wages along with the commitment to fully fund the proposed 20% wage increase for a period of eight years." Mr Mondo said.

"However we are keen to understand in greater detail this policy announcement to ensure that families are not left worse off and to ensure that this additional support is fully funded for perpetuity and the long-term viability of the early learning sector."

"With over 10,000 early learning services delivering kindergarten/preschool programs across Australia, and over 60% (over 6,800 services) of these programs being delivered by long day care centres, the long-term viability of the long day care sector is **imperative** for the ongoing delivery of these programs."

"The ALP's recognition of the benefits of early learning for our children and the need for affordable, quality services for all Australian families is welcomed and applauded." Mr Mondo said.

"ACA calls on the Coalition to match this commitment and adopt all of ACA's recommended policies with a view to ensuring that **every child in Australia** has the **best start in life.**" Mr Mondo concluded.

ENDS

Media enquiries: Paul Mondo 0411 587 170 or Nesha Hutchinson 0412 085 068

Australian Childcare Alliance

A Suite 6, 539 Highett Road, Highett VIC 3190 P 03 9532 2017

President Paul Mondo (VIC) 0411 587 170 President@childcarealliance.org.au

Vice President Nesha Hutchinson (WA) 0412 085 068 Nesha.Hutchinson@childcarealliance.org.au

State Presidents

QLD/ACT	Majella Fitzsimmons	0410 526 136
NSW	Lyn Connolly	0425 225 275
VIC	Paul Mondo	0411 587 170
WA	Ann Chemello	0408 935 703
SA	Kerry Mahony	0419 819 754

BACKGROUND

As the national peak body in the Australian Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) sector, the Australian Childcare Alliance (ACA) represents more than 2,500 members and approximately 360,000 families throughout Australia.

We work on behalf of long day care service owners and operators, to ensure families have the opportunity to access affordable, quality ECEC throughout Australia.

The ACA has existed in various forms for more than 30 years and has extensive experience in the fields of early childhood, education, training and management. Our experience means that we understand the critical role a quality ECEC program plays in the life of families and the importance of a viable long day care sector in preparing children for the best start in life and learning.

ACA's national and state bodies work collaboratively with all levels of government, regulatory bodies and other stakeholders to ensure that families are supported into the future with a sustainable, affordable and viable sector, with a focus on the best interests of Australia's young children.

*ACA's pre-election **Policy Paper: Lets Give Our Children The Best Start In Life** is available at www.BestStartInLife.org.au.*

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