

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate Release

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Australia's early learning peak body welcomes new Minister On behalf of families, ACA thanks the Australian Government for its support in 2020

Australia's peak body for early learning (childcare) services, congratulates the Hon Alan Tudge on his new role as Minister for Education and Youth. The Australian Childcare Alliance (ACA) also praised the outgoing Education Minister, the Hon Dan Tehan's commitment to the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) sector, especially in protecting families and educators against the worst economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We're tremendously grateful to the Australian Government and Minister Tehan, for his ongoing engagement and amazing support for the early learning sector during this terrible global health crisis." ACA President Paul Mondo said.

"This year has been an incredible challenge for our 360,000 families and more than 2,500 providers who care for them," Mr Mondo said. "We greatly appreciated Minister Tehan's collaboration and leadership in addressing the needs of our sector, in one of the most difficult years ever imaginable."

At a time when more than 30% of ACA members faced imminent collapse; the Australian Government's emergency \$1.6 billion *Early Childhood Education and Care Relief Package* and the *Transition Payments*, effectively secured the ongoing survival of the early learning sector.

This immediate injection of financial support also ensured that essential and emergency workers with young children, could remain on the frontline during the pandemic.

"We look forward to working closely with Minister Tudge to continue our collective efforts in protecting our families, educators and providers against this shocking virus, which sadly seems to be flaring once again in NSW," Mr Mondo said.

"Despite the trauma, this pandemic has certainly pulled the curtain back on just how vital, safe and sustainable our ECEC services are to the Australian economy and what a safe and calm haven we are for working parents.

Working with Minister Tudge, and the Australian Government, we have no doubt that all of Australia's young children, and in particular our most vulnerable and disadvantaged, can continue to access affordable and high quality early learning and ensure every child has the best start in life."

ENDS

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Australian Childcare Alliance

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Background

The Australian Childcare Alliance (ACA) works on behalf of early learning (long day care) service owners and operators to ensure families have an opportunity to access affordable early childhood education and care (ECEC) throughout Australia.

Our national and state bodies work collaboratively with all levels of government, regulatory authorities and other stakeholders with an evidence-based approach, to ensure that families are supported into the future with a sustainable, affordable and viable ECEC sector.

Affordable access to early learning services is a huge priority for many Australian families with young children, as well as those planning to have children.

The benefits of high-quality early learning are now well recognised and acknowledged locally and globally across the education sector, as well as **among families**.

There is a wealth of academic research that demonstrates that children who enjoy quality early learning are likely to be well socialised, confident, inquisitive about the world, accepting of diversity, resilient to manage challenges and also to be life-long learners.

ACA believes that with the right policy and financial frameworks in place, we could ensure that **every child in Australia** has access to high quality, affordable and sustainable early learning (childcare) services, and therefore the **best start in life**.

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