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MEDIA RELEASE

Australian Government provides immediate targeted support to the most vulnerable early learning services

Australia's peak body for early learning (childcare) commends the Australian Government for recognising the immediate impact of the latest COVID-19 lockdowns across Greater Sydney, Melbourne and regional Victoria, by providing [immediate targeted support](#) for those service providers struggling the most.

The Australian Childcare Alliance (ACA) President, Mr Paul Mondo, said the new support will make the difference between staying afloat or closing for many service providers in NSW as well as Victoria, bearing the brunt of the latest COVID-19 lockdowns.

"This targeted support means that those early learning services, struggling the most from lockdowns can keep the lights on and still be there for families on the other side of this terrible pandemic," Mr Mondo said. "We're extremely grateful for this rapid response to what is another emerging crisis for our sector."

The support payments will be contingent on a number of conditions. Eligible services must anticipate, or be experiencing, attendance below 50 per cent, agree to waive gap fees for all families whose children are not attending, maintain staffing levels, agree to a fee freeze for the duration of support and refrain from accessing other Commonwealth Government funded supports.

"Coupled with the government's recent allowance for service providers in declared hotspots to waive the gap fee to families during this period, we hope this new policy provides the assistance our sector so desperately needs," Mr Mondo said.

As the new support mechanism is implemented in practice, we will get an understanding of how it is working at the service level, and whether there are any unexpected problems that may need addressing."

"As the bedrock of Australia's economy, our sector works hard to protect the children in our care, the educators who look after them and to support our families during this challenging COVID-19 pandemic.

We would like to wholeheartedly thank Minister Tudge, the Treasurer and the Prime Minister for listening to our members and recognising the importance of ensuring that Australian families have access to high quality early learning services throughout this difficult year," Mr Mondo said.

"ACA will continue to assess the situation and work with the government in the best interests of families and their children at this time." Mr Mondo concluded.

ENDS

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

Australian Childcare Alliance

A: Suites 1&2, 10A Atherton Road, Oakleigh VIC 3166

E: president@childcarealliance.org.au

W: www.childcarealliance.org.au



About the Australian Childcare Alliance

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.

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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