

Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2021

## MEDIA RELEASE

### ACA commends government relief for families isolating in COVID climate

Australia's peak body for early learning (childcare) services commends the Australian Government for offering a level of support to those families with young children who are directed to isolate under COVID health orders during the months ahead.

Early learning service providers will be able to waive gap fees when their service, or part of the service, has to close because of a COVID case, or if a family has been directed to isolate.

This measure will be available to service providers until 30 June 2022.

In the same timeframe, a further 10 allowable absence days will be available to families nationally through to 30 June 2022, bringing the total number of allowable absences this financial year to 52 days

The Australian Childcare Alliance (ACA) President, Mr Paul Mondo, said these measures will help remove financial pressure on families who test COVID-positive and/or are directed to isolate, or simply cannot attend the early learning service during a temporary period of closure.

"We have already witnessed this scenario many times, particularly in New South Wales and Victoria, and we know that families struggle to continue paying fees when unable to work due to isolation requirements," Mr Mondo said.

"ACA has been in discussions with the Australian Government around this scenario, and we are pleased that our recommendations have been implemented."

"These measures will provide greater flexibility for service providers to accommodate the needs of their families impacted by COVID isolation requirements."

We would like to extend our gratitude to the Minister for Education and the Treasurer for their support in ensuring that all Australian families have affordable access to high quality early learning services," Mr Mondo said.

"ACA will continue to work closely with the Australian Government on behalf of our members and their families, as we navigate the months ahead in this shifting economic and health landscape," Mr Mondo said. "We will always prioritise the wellbeing of our families and the education and safety of their children."

#### ENDS

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### 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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