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MEDIA RELEASE

Federal Budget reflects the Albanese Government's commitment to the early learning sector

Australia's peak body for early learning (childcare) commends the Albanese Government for its first ever Federal Budget. It fulfilled its pre-election commitments to families by making **affordable early learning services** one of its key priorities.

The Australian Childcare Alliance (ACA) President, Mr Paul Mondo, said the government recognises the immediate need for affordable access to high-quality Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC), with **accessibility** and **affordability** being a key factor in **both parents** returning to work for many Australian families.

"Increasing the rate of the Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is a really positive outcome for Australian families who are already struggling with the rising cost of living," Mr Mondo explained.

"But we are concerned that this significant investment by the government could be negated if we can't meet the increase in demand due to a critical shortage of educators."

Mr Mondo said the additional funding for early childhood degree places and fee-free TAFE and vocational education places, announced by the Minister for Education, the Hon Jason Clare MP, was a critical first step in expanding the early learning workforce and meeting the needs of the sector.

"There are, however, further opportunities to attract and retain early childhood educators and teachers to ensure the successful implementation of these measures.

"ACA has long been advocating that affordability for families and workforce shortages are the most pressing issues facing our sector Australia-wide, so we are extremely grateful that these concerns have been recognised and the funding is now locked in to address these issues over the coming months."

"We will continue to work directly with the Australian Government on policies that support accessibility and affordability for families, while at the same time providing the critical support needed to build a strong supply of highly skilled early childhood educators and teachers," Mr Mondo concluded.

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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