

MEDIA RELEASE

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EDUCATION & CARE SECTOR LAUNCHES AN AMBITIOUS PLAN FOR REFORM

Every child in Australia will receive two days of early education and care each week if peak bodies in the education and care sector have their new ambitious plan adopted at the approaching Federal Election.

Community Child Care Association (CCC), Community Early Learning Australia (CELA) and Early Learning Association Australia (ELAA) have joined forces to build a plan that guarantees access to high quality education and care, delivered by a dedicated, qualified and fairly paid workforce.

Speaking at the launch of the joint plan, Executive Director of CCC, Julie Price described it as a “blueprint for government to ensure every child gets the best possible start in life”.

“Our plan delivers the most important and consequential reforms ever seen in the Australian education and care sector. It means every child has the same opportunities, regardless of what their family earns or where they live,” Julie Price, said.

“That’s why our 6 Point Plan’s cornerstones are two fully funded days of care and education from birth to school, and the reshaping of pay, conditions and quality standards to secure a higher quality workforce.”

Michele Carnegie, the CEO of CELA said families struggle to access the right care for their children because of significant government under-investment in education and care services. “It’s a ‘double-whammy’ of poorer outcomes for children’s learning and higher costs of living pressures for families,” Michele said.

“Children from rural areas, and from disadvantaged households are more likely to start school behind their more advantaged city counterparts. Greater government investment is needed to level the playing field and ensure all children get the same opportunities.”

“It also harms parents, particularly women. High childcare costs mean the financial benefits of working are marginal. As a result, they drop out of the paid workforce, making it harder to return later and producing much lower lifetime earnings.”

“We also know the sector is facing a major workforce crisis. Low pay, high staff turnover and uneven access to quality training mean services struggle to find the quality staff needed by children and families,” David Worland CEO of ELAA said.

“The combination of these factors results in immediate and generational missed opportunities.”

The three peak bodies said the 2022 Federal Election was a time for Australian families to demand action and for politicians to commit to implementing solutions.

“We know what the problems and solutions are. Reviews and inquiries are not needed and just won’t cut it as an election pledge,” Michele Carnegie said.

The ‘6 Point Plan for Australia’s education and care sector’ proposes:

1. two days a week of funded early education and care for all children from birth to school
2. a commitment to the inclusion of all children
3. mandatory National Quality Standard assessments and ratings at least every three years

4. the creation of a national industrial instrument for the education and care sector to provide educators with fairer levels of pay
5. a National Children's Education & Care Workforce Strategy
6. properly funded infrastructure and sector support.

"We are calling for bipartisan support to deliver better access to high quality education and care for children, better wages and conditions for educators, and opportunities for all parents and carers to work," David Worland said.

"The education and care sector demands urgent attention from all parties and candidates between now and Election Day. Australia's future literally depends on it."

ENDS

Contact

Kel Watt
Watt Advocacy & Communications
0411 707 489
kel@wattadvocacy.com

Interview opportunities

Julie Price
Executive Director
Community Child Care
Association

Michele Carnegie
Chief Executive Officer
Community Early Learning
Australia

David Worland
Chief Executive Officer
Early Learning Association
Australia