



**Early Childhood Australia**  
A voice for young children

**OUR  
VISION:  
EVERY  
YOUNG  
CHILD IS  
THRIVING  
AND  
LEARNING**

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Monday, 4 May 2015

### **Extension of preschool funding acknowledges the importance of early learning**

National children's peak body Early Childhood Australia (ECA) today said that the Government's announcement of a two-year extension to preschool funding would help to build Australia's future prosperity.

The Universal Access funding was due to expire in 2015, casting uncertainty over the sector. The \$840 million announcement comes at a critical time and has shown that the Government recognises the benefits and importance of quality early childhood education and care.

'Access to quality early learning amplifies children's development, their cognitive and social emotional skills, helping to boost our nation's future prosperity', said Ms Samantha Page, CEO of ECA.

'This is a welcome acknowledgement from the Government of the importance of quality early learning to children's development.'

Ms Page also pointed to research from the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children that clearly demonstrates that children who have attended a quality early childhood program with a qualified early childhood teacher do better in literacy and numeracy in their school years.

'The benefits from participation in preschool have a lasting and positive impact on children's outcomes throughout their schooling.'

ECA has also asked the Federal Government to ensure that the best interests of children remain at the forefront of their consideration when considering future Commonwealth funding of the childcare subsidy system.

'Children do not suddenly begin learning at four years old. That's why other countries like the United Kingdom are increasing access for children from as young as two years old', said Ms Page.

ECA has recommended that the Government should provide a minimum of two days of subsidised quality early learning, regardless of their parents' work status, to support children's development. This comes as the Government considers a new and tightened activity test for parents to apply for childcare subsidies.

### **For more information contact:**

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