



Early Childhood Australia
A voice for young children

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

MEDIA RELEASE

10 May 2015

Working families to benefit from historic reform of early childhood education and care subsidies

The national early childhood peak body Early Childhood Australia (ECA) today welcomed the Government's Families Package as a historic reform to the early childhood education and care subsidies.

These reforms will see a dramatic overhaul of the Howard era subsidy system with an additional investment of \$3.5 billion to establish a 'Child Care Subsidy' in 2017.

'It is great to see the Government making a significant investment to improve access to quality early learning services for working families', said Ms Samantha Page, CEO of ECA.

'These historic reforms to establish a single means tested subsidy will make access to early learning services more affordable for the majority of working families', she said.

Ms Page also welcomed the improved support for high income earners but was concerned that this extra support was coming at the cost of children excluded from the system because of a tightened activity test.

'We are concerned that workforce participation objectives have been placed ahead of the interests of children in the package. It is often the children whose parents aren't working that benefit the most from access to quality early learning.'

Ms Page called on the Government to consult further with the sector on the 24 hour per fortnight base subsidy for families earning under \$60 000, who do not meet the tightened activity test. The current system provides 48 hours of Child Care Benefit per fortnight.

'Children need at least two days of quality early learning to amplify their development. We would like to see the Government consult further on the base level of subsidy and consider what level of provision is practical for families while also in the best interests of children.'

For more information contact

Samuel Edwards—0450 760 511