



Early Childhood Australia
A voice for young children

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

MEDIA RELEASE

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New childcare package—many families will need help to navigate the new system

The new Jobs for Families childcare legislation will improve access to early childhood services for many working families but there is concern over the complexity of the package for families in insecure work or who can't predict their income says Early Childhood Australia (ECA), the peak organisation for early childhood services.

'Early Childhood Australia will work with the government to help families navigate the complexities of the new system, which will be challenging for parents with insecure work or who can't accurately predict their income', said CEO Samantha Page in Canberra today.

'We are particularly concerned about the impact of the "Activity Test" on vulnerable families and those with insecure work arrangements, who are currently accessing two days a week of childcare.

'The real casualties of the new system could be vulnerable children, who benefit the most from access to quality early learning as it amplifies their development and performance at school. We are especially concerned about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children living in remote areas.

'Ideally, government support for early learning should ensure all families have access to two days per week, and then apply the activity test after that', said Ms Page.

Children's access to early childhood education led by qualified educators [amplifies their achievement at school](#). Research shows that children who attended early childhood education and care score 18 to 20 points higher in reading, spelling and numeracy, and 13 points higher in writing compared to children who do not attend early childhood education and care.

Investment in early learning will also increase our future prosperity as a nation. Research by [PricewaterhouseCoopers](#) last year shows that increasing participation in quality early learning by vulnerable children would add more than \$13 billion to the GDP by 2050.

'We welcome the increased investment in early childhood education that this package will provide but don't believe it will fully achieve the economic goals the government is seeking.

'To be fully successful, the package would support both lifting the workforce participation of parents and getting better outcomes for all children so that they can achieve better results at school and in life', concluded Samantha Page.

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