



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

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

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Thursday 23 March, 2017

# **Crossbench must stand firm on Childcare Bill amendments in best interest of children**

**Early Childhood Australia calls on the cross bench to stand firm in negotiations with the Government around the child care package or block the bill in the Senate if key amendments are not made.**

"We are calling on the Xenophon team and other Crossbench Senators to at least support an increase to 15 hours of care as a baseline to allow the most vulnerable children consistent access to 2 days of care a week," CEO Sam Page said.

"Early Childhood Australia has consistently argued that a minimum of 15 hours early childhood education per week is in the best interests of children and that we only supported the Bill if this was included.

"We call on the Senate to block the Bill today, unless there is an amendment to increase the base entitlement to 15 hours a week.

"We also need the income threshold for a base level of care increase to \$100,000 and make changes to the activity test to make it more flexible for families who are in casual or unpredictable work situations.

"Without these amendments families with only one partner working and earning more than \$65,000 per year would receive ZERO child care subsidies and face the full cost of child care fees. They are unlikely to be able to afford this on such a low wage and their children risk missing out on the benefits of quality early learning.

"The Bill also needs to lift the support to Indigenous children who are twice as likely to enter school developmentally vulnerable, and who need guaranteed support to at least 3 days of care under the new package. Then we may actually start to see the gap actually closing on early learning indicators.

"We are concerned at reports that the Government has stepped away from their commitment to increase the hours for the most vulnerable children in the community," concluded Ms Page.

*Early Childhood Australia is the peak advocacy body for children under eight, their families and early childhood professionals.*

### **Download Joint Submission to Senate Inquiry [no 14]:**

[http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/Senate/Community\\_Affairs/OmnibusSavingsReform/Submissions](http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Community_Affairs/OmnibusSavingsReform/Submissions)

**For more information contact:** Carolin Wenzel 0475 554 999