



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

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

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Thursday, 9 March 2017

### **Kate Ellis MP leaves a solid legacy in Early Childhood Education achievement**

Early Childhood Australia's CEO Samantha Page today acknowledged the significant contribution of Shadow Minister for Early Childhood Education and Development, the Hon Kate Ellis MP, as she announced her retirement from Federal politics at the next election.

As the ALP's long standing spokesperson on early childhood issues and as the Minister for Early Childhood, Kate Ellis oversaw the introduction of the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care as well as the National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Preschool.

"These were both very significant COAG reforms that have been crucial in building a system that is better placed to provide access to good quality early childhood care and education for all children," said Samantha Page.

The National Partnership Agreement on Early childhood Education was first negotiated in 2008 to give access to 15 hours of preschool education in the year before school for all children, delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher. Since that time, the Commonwealth has invested \$2.8billion and the participation rate of four year olds in early learning has increased from 67 per cent five years ago to nearly a hundred percent in some states and 84% on average today.

"Early Childhood Australia congratulates the Labor leadership in prioritising a dedicated spokesperson for early education and care. Since 2009 Kate Ellis has held roles as both Minister and Shadow Minister. In the reshuffle of her portfolios we urge Opposition Leader Bill Shorten to continue the Early Childhood Shadow Minister role," said Ms Page.

"We need all political parties to understand that the early learning children experience before they start at school plays a crucial role in their social and educational development. It's especially important that vulnerable children are able to access affordable, quality early education and care to improve their outcomes both at school and later in life," said Ms Page.

"Kate Ellis is highly regarded across the early childhood sector for her commitment to improving the quality and reducing the cost to parents of early childhood education. Educators and advocates for early learning also appreciated that Kate Ellis brought her own experience of motherhood and juggling child care with career. We knew that she understood early childhood issues from both a policy and personal perspective."

"It is understandable that she has made the decision to spend more time with her young son and family, we wish her well with her future plans," concluded Ms Page.

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

Kate Ellis MP Statement: <http://www.kateellis.com.au/statement>

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