



Early Childhood Australia
A voice for young children

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

MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday 2 April, 2020

ECA welcomes early learning and care support package

The Australian Government's support package for the early learning and care sector will provide immediate financial relief for thousands of services, educators and families across Australia

Early Childhood Australia (ECA) welcomes the support package, which provides greater certainty for early learning and care services.

'This announcement tackles most of the big issues that services and families have been grappling with over the past month,' ECA CEO Samantha Page said.

'Families will now continue to have access to the services they trust, and services know they can stay open with core jobs secured.

'For families who want to keep their children at home, there is no longer a terrible choice between paying a gap fee and losing their place at the service.'

Ms Page said it would also be important for the government to make contact with the hundreds of early learning and care services that have closed their doors over the past few weeks, to get them back into business.

In making the announcement the Prime Minister and Minister for Education Dan Tehan implied that early childhood services will have access to the Job Keeper payment scheme as well as the funding for service delivery—this will be crucial to keeping the broader workforce engaged and ready to ramp up capability when Australian families start going back to work in large numbers.

There are some complexities to work through—some services that are part of not-for-profit or local government entities with other activities have not dropped below the 30% turnover benchmark across their entire business or organisation.

ECA will continue to maintain close contact with its members as the new scheme takes effect, to make sure that services and families are receiving the support they need.

ECA is keen to ensure the health and safety of educators and the provision of necessary supplies for children. Soap, hand sanitisers, cleaning products, food and nappies are very scarce in some areas, and early learning and care services will need government help to secure supplies.

ECA also welcomes confirmation of Universal Access funding for preschools and kindergartens in 2021. ECA looks forward to resuming momentum towards longer-term preschool funding, on the other side of the pandemic.

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Early Childhood Australia is the peak advocacy body for children from birth to eight years, their families and early childhood professionals.